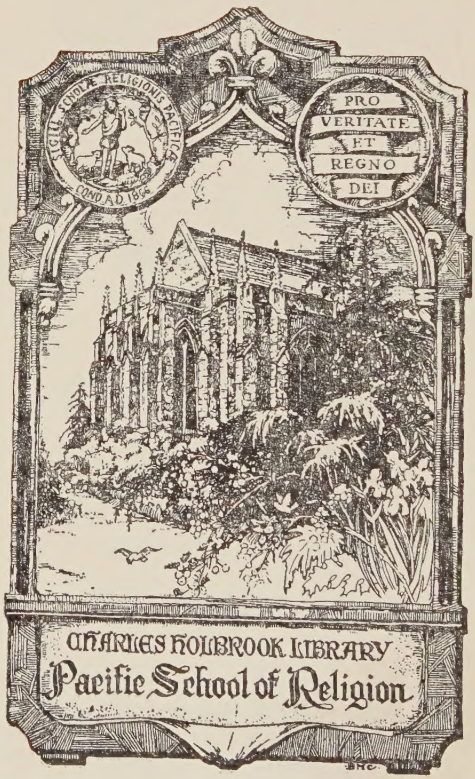
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THE

CONGREGATIONAL VISITER.

FOR

PARENTS, CHURCH MEMBERS, AND SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHERS.

EDITED BY

J. A. ALBRO AND ASA BULLARD.

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TO

CONGREGATIONAL VISITER.

VOLUME III....1846.

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THE

CONGREGATIONAL VISITER.

NO. 1....JANUARY, 1846.....VOL. III.

THE NEW YEAR.

"GRACE be unto you, and peace from God, our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ."

With this apostolic and most Christian salutation, Paul commences all his epistles to the churches; and with the same wish, respecting our fellow-laborers, we commence another year of our labors in behalf of Sabbath schools. It is a wish which relates to the highest and most enduring good, a good, without which, all the blessings of earth would be worthless, with which the hardest labor, and the heaviest afflictions that fall to the lot of man, all would be a light yoke and an easy burden. He who enjoys the peace and favor of God, has all that he needs. He can look back upon the past, characterized as it may have been by errors and mistakes, and failings, and despondency, with the assurance that a free and gracious pardon has cancelled every sin, and that divine wisdom will bring good even out of the evil that has embittered his labor. He can look forward to the future, with a calm reliance upon a providence that watches with sleepless vigilance over the field of duty and of trial, that will not suffer a sparrow to fall to the ground unnecessarily, that will not permit a good seed to perish, nor a work done for

the glory of God, to fail of its due reward. And whatever time, in its rapid flight, and unlooked for changes, may bring, he can safely regard as designed for his personal benefit, and destined to work for his good. It was to Paul, exhausted by labor, and oppressed by suffering, that Christ said, "My grace is sufficient for thee." That all who watch for souls,—who go forth from Sabbath to Sabbath, bearing precious seed,—who are laboring together in the hope of the gospel, for the extension of God's kingdom in the world,—may enjoy the grace that was so necessary and so sufficient for the apostle, and the divine peace which is able to keep the mind and the heart through Jesus Christ, is our own continual and earnest desire, in behalf of all our patrons and co-laborers.

With respect to the present volume, we have not much to say. Grateful for the evidence which we have, that our past labors have been, in some measure, acceptable to our patrons, and that they have not been altogether fruitless, we commence the present year with fresh hope and zeal. We are aware of the serious responsibility that rests upon us. The magnitude and importance of the Sabbath school cause seem to us greater than ever; and we shall spare no pains to render the present volume as worthy as possible of the cause of which it is an advocate. The arrangements that have been made with respect to the coming year, justify the expectation and the hope that our subscribers will feel increasing confidence in the Visiter as an auxiliary in their work. There has been, we believe, some diminution in the number of subscribers since the commencement of the Visiter; but this, as we have reason to believe, has been occasioned, not by any want of ability, or interest in the matter of which it has been composed, but merely by the great number of religious periodicals, all of which have more or less that is adapted to Sabbath schools, and which have tended to limit and restrict the circulation of each other as well as this. Our present patronage, however, is very respectable. And when we

consider that the Congregational Visiter is the only periodical devoted to the Sabbath school cause, in our denomination in New England, that it is the offspring and the exponent of Congregationalism,—that it is perfectly free to speak for the interests of the denomination that supports it,—and that its place could not be supplied by any other Sabbath school publication now in existence,—we are confident in the belief that all our lost ground will be regained, that our denomination, realizing their need of this instrumentality, will give it a more efficient support, and that a more extended circulation and greater usefulness await the Visiter.

We need not relate the principles upon which this periodical is conducted, nor give any new assurance to our readers that, to the extent of our ability, we will be faithful to their interests. The various classes for which the Visiter was designed, will not be neglected. Errors and abuses in Sabbath schools will be pointed out. Salutary reforms will be suggested. The best method of conducting schools will be sought for. All the light that wisdom and experience throw upon the great subject of education, will, as far as possible, find a place in our pages. We shall continue to persuade teachers to aim at excellence in all their efforts; to cherish a love of order, to prepare themselves thoroughly to give instruction,—to realize more and more the value of the immortal souls committed for a while to their influence,—to consecrate all their powers of mind and heart to the great work in which they are engaged.

With these remarks, we commend the forthcoming volume of the Visiter to the friends of the Massachusetts Sabbath School Society, praying that "he who ministereth seed to the sower, may both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness, that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound in every good work, being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God."

THE SABBATH SCHOOL CONCERT.

THE SABBATH SCHOOL AS IT USED TO BE, AND NOW IS.

BY MRS. H. C. KNIGHT.

In the centre of our village, twenty-five years ago, stood a one story school-house, with two rooms, one for the boys and the other and smaller for the girls. There were holden schools during the week, and here were assembled at the ringing of the first bell, every Lord's day morning, children and teachers from the three congregations of our village. The superintendent, a tall, spare man, stood in the master's desk, in the double dignity of the superintendent of the Sabbath school and of the very master himself, who had wielded his authority with resistless power, during the days of the week. A chapter was read, and a hymn was sung, but no prayer was offered, unless one happened in, accustomed to lead public devotions. The superintendent was not a pious man and refused to engage in the exercise. The girls then passed to their own room, and arranged themselves in their respective classes. Recitations commenced: they were verses or chapters from the Bible. The *length* of the lesson was the standard of good scholarship, and she received a "ticket," who recited most perfectly the greatest number of verses. Ah, do I not remember Betsey, the prodigy, the admiration, the envy of our class! Verse after verse, yea, chapter after chapter, did she recite in rapid succession, until the wonder grew, "where and when she would end." Two, three, four chapters did she sometimes commit to memory, and "get through," and receive a ticket, for, of course, none of us dared to cope with her. The next came, feebly, fearfully reciting, attaching no distinct meaning to the verses and caring only to remember the words. The next and next, perhaps twisting her kerchief, or biting her linen mitts, in the fear of missing an important copulative.

By this time, the church bells rung and the school was

dismissed to meet again in the afternoon. At the close of the afternoon service, the school re-assembled. Its exercises consisted in reciting hymns and the catechism; and here again the quantity recited met with its due reward. No question was ever asked to fathom our real ignorance or knowledge of the lesson; no comments or explanations of difficult passages were ever vouchsafed; no remarks were ever made upon the great truths which the lesson contained; like the system of instruction in the secular schools, reciting largest lessons perfectly, was the *main point*, and who will deny that perfect recitations is a great point to be secured in Sabbath school teaching? But that it is all, we cannot, now-a-days, admit. The great truths which the lesson embraces, must be evolved, illustrated, and impressed with serious earnestness by the teacher, upon the conscience of the child; they must be fastened there, like seed hidden in the ground, that in due time they may germinate, spring up and bear fruit.

The school draws near its close; a bell is rung, and it reassembles in the great room. The superintendent holds in his hand a book, from which he reads a story, sometimes merely moral, sometimes religious, but an entertaining story, full of incident, and to every scholar it was the most interesting exercise of the day, at least to all whose memory failed to secure a ticket. That book, with marble paper covers and red morocco back! that dear delightful story-book, how we longed to possess it! to hold it in our very hands, to explore its pages, and linger at will over its good girls and bad boys! How eagerly did we watch its egress from the desk, how greedily listen, how mournfully behold it closed, when the superintendent suddenly stopped, as he sometimes did in the midst of his story, and changing his tone, declare it was quite time to dismiss the school. What disappointment followed as we went away, longing for the the next Sabbath, and

why? O, to hear how this story *turned out*,—we were sure to come.

The book I have never met since; and though, in later times, many of those old scholars have often discussed its merits as a Sabbath school book, we remain ignorant of its name or birth, and the old superintendent is not now here to reveal it.

No minister ever visited the school, nor did the church pray for its welfare. No little child was taken by the hand and led to Jesus. No library was formed to supply the children with instructive and interesting books. No missionary intelligence was ever communicated, and no missionary offerings were ever heard of. Such was our Sabbath school a long while ago.

The account of the present condition of our school must be deferred to the next concert.

EXHORTATION TO SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHERS.

The superintendent of a Sabbath school in this city, in his new year's address to his school, gives the following impressive exhortation to the teachers:

"How exalted is your station, how honored your position! Men will toil long, and spend fortunes, that they may occupy a chair of state; but how inferior such a post, compared with yours! God has sent a message of peace to man,—that message you bear, and God has sent you as his messengers to your scholars, to teach that message to them. How important, how responsible a duty! Think of it: God is the author of that message,—it points out the *only* way of peace: you are sent by God to inform your scholars of that way. It is important you should know well that way yourselves; that you should *clearly* and *faithfully* point it out to your pupils,

and entreat them, in Christ's name, to walk therein. Remember that God, that Christ, that all the holy angels and redeemed spirits are looking on with anxious eyes, to witness your faithfulness in delivering that message. Your office is by no means an unmeaning one; you cannot attach too much importance to it. Heaven and its glorious throng, are moved at its importance. They look with indifference upon the rise and fall of a nation; but upon a faithful Sabbath school teacher they look with the deepest interest. They hover over you in your hours of preparation and prayer for your classes, and they rejoice with great joy when you so impress upon the minds of your scholars the truths of that message, as to lead even *one* soul to cry

> "My God, permit my tongue
> This joy, to call thee mine;
> And let my early cries prevail
> To taste thy love divine!"

Remember you are dealing with souls which are to live eternally; that they are *now* like the melted silver, capable of receiving impressions which will last for ever. Then, stamp upon them the image of Christ; and though it may show but faintly *now*, God will bless your faithful, prayerful labor, and bring out that image to shine as a star in glory. Remember that Christ, the Great Teacher, is your pattern, and, that in order to be a faithful teacher, pleasing God, you must be like him.

Like him *in prayer*.—The stillness of night and early morn witnessed his earnest supplications for his disciples.

Like him *in teaching*.—The hearts of his hearers burned within them, and their souls were quickened at his words.

Like him *in spirit*.—Peaceful, meek, humble, and pure in heart.

Like him *by the way*.—Ever uttering words of comfort and kindness to all who came to him troubled.

Like him *at all times*.—Doing the will of your Father in heaven.

Like him *in knowledge*.—Possessing the knowledge of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

A *faithful* teacher will study and ponder much over God's word. Knowledge drops not into the sluggard's mouth, but comes as hidden treasures from much toil. How can you direct others, if you know but imperfectly the ways of peace yourselves? Be faithful,—be intelligent,—be active,—be prayerful teachers; and God will crown your labors with the salvation of souls.

Shrink not from your work because there are arduous labors and great responsibilities in your path. Let not the question be, How dare I assume these labors and responsibilities?—but rather, How dare I refuse them? Christ expects fruit from each and all of his followers; and he would have no barren fig-trees in his paths, no idle servants; but have them all, those who came *early* and those who came late, enter, and labor in his vineyard, and receive a full reward."

ON FAMILY GOVERNMENT.---NO. II.

THE END OF PARENTAL GOVERNMENT.

Government is of God. Parental government does not depend upon the whim or the caprice of parents. God gives them certain duties, and enforces them with high sanctions. The end of government in a family is to secure obedience to wholesome laws, submission to just restraints. The duty of a parent to provide food sufficient for a child, and to fit him, by education, for usefulness in life, is not more binding than is the obligation to secure the respect and obedience of that child. The good of the child and the stability of all social excellence demand it.

That parental authority be enforced is the especial and

repeated command of God. The fifth command, with promise, is this: "Honor thy father and mother, that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth." This Paul interprets when he says, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right." (Eph. 6: 1, 2.) Among other qualifications that Abraham possessed, which led the Almighty to select him as the "father of all those that believe," and conferred upon him the distinguished title, of the "friend of God," was the authority he would exercise over his household. "I know him that he will *command* his children and his household after him; and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment." (Gen. 18: 19.) The curse of God which fell upon Eli, the high priest, which curse could not be removed "with sacrifice nor offering," originated in the neglect of his authority as a parent. "I will judge his house for ever, for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and *he restrained them not.*" (1 Sam. 3: 13, 14.)

Provision was made in the law of God for the punishment of rebellious children, whom the parents could not control. "If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, which will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and that *when they have chastened him*, will not hearken unto them, then shall his father and his mother lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the elders of his city, and unto the gate of his place; and they shall say unto the elders of his city, This our son is stubborn and rebellious; he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton and a drunkard. And all the men of the city shall stone him with stones that he die. So shalt thou put evil away from among you; and all Israel shall hear and fear." (Deut. 21: 18—21.) So heinous and awful in the sight of God was disobedience to parents! Eli was cursed because he did not *restrain* his sons. The parents under the law could not avail themselves of the provision made for disobedient children, until they had done

all they could to maintain their authority. Paul places disobedience to parents in the same category with all unrighteousness, with envy, hatred to God, implacability, with malignity, destitution of natural affection, and with maliciousness and murder. And he adds, that the guilty are "worthy of death." (Rom. 1: 29, 32.) These testimonies are only *selections* from the Old and the New Testament upon this subject. The general language of the Bible shows its importance. "Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying." "Withhold not correction from the child, for if thou beatest him with a rod he shall not die." "Foolishness (wickedness) is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him." "The rod and reproof give wisdom; but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame."

In the childhood and youth of Jesus, our Redeemer, God sanctions the relations of life. At the early age of twelve years, Christ was about his Father's business; teaching the doctors of the law, confounding the mighty, and reviving the spirit of prophecy. Yet when found by his reputed parents, he left his work at their command, returned to his home in Nazareth, and became subject to his parents. Thus in his life he sanctioned the obedience due to parental authority, as of old he hallowed the Sabbath by his example.

Parents cannot receive that respect which is due from their children, unless they are obeyed. The Bible commands children to "honor their parents." It attests that "the eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it." But insubordination forbids respect; the magistrate or the parent who is not obeyed, is not respected. The germ of filial respect is reverence for authority. Take any family in which parents are treated with rudeness and disrespect, in which daughters are uncivil, and sons unkind, and you find a home where the word of the

mother is not obeyed, and the command of the father is not law. It is so in human government; it is so in the government of God. And many parents sigh over the habitual disrespect of their children towards them, which even the presence of strangers cannot restrain, while such conduct is the direct result of mistaken indulgence. While there was hope they did not chasten them. M. H. S.

STANZAS, WRITTEN DURING ILLNESS.

Is there not a place of light,
Where thy face, O God, is seen?
Where no black, oppressive night
Comes the soul and thee between?

Is there not a place of rest,
Where thy peace is ever felt?
Where thy saints, supremely blest,
Beneath thy smile in transport melt?

Is there not a place of joy,
Where thy friends shall gathered be,
Where the high, the sole employ
Is to praise and honor thee?

Thither would my soul be gone,
From the ills that pierce me here?
From the sin, the wrath, the scorn,
That darken earth with guilt and fear.

But awhile my lot may be
In this field of strife to stay,
To show the lost the way to thee,
For Zion's weal to watch and pray.

Let me then in patience wait,
My earthly task with zeal fulfil,
And every duty of my state
Perform according to thy will.

Arm me with thy Spirit's power,
Fill me with thy peace divine,
And prepare me for the hour
That shall make me wholly thine.

PRIVILEGES AND PLEASURES OF SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHERS.

1. The association with pious companions. Whatever exceptions there may be, we sincerely trust, and think it may be said of Sabbath school teachers as a body, that they are a band whose hearts the Lord has touched, and who, by the help of divine grace, have consecrated themselves to the work and service of God, and who are desirous of doing good in their day and generation; to be brought within the sphere of their fellowship, and to be associated in their labors (we speak from experience), we consider to be no small blessing. The most advanced Christian finds it good for advice, for solace, and for support, to be associated with those who are traveling the same road as himself; how much must they who, in comparison with such, are but just commencing their course. Persons of this description constitute a large portion of those engaged in Sabbath school labors; busied during the hours of toil in the concerns of the world, often, there, standing alone in their attachment to religion, grieved by the scoffer, or, at least, by the indifferent, the Sabbath school and its connections become to them as a well-spring of life, a pure and invigorating atmosphere in which they breathe, and are refreshed. Often has the writer rejoiced to escape for a season from his daily occupations and companions, to meet with those with whom he was united in this delightful work; and to spend, not only the Sabbath, but the week-night hour in company with his fellow-teachers, was to him both pleasant and profitable. From such week-night meetings, devoted to prayer and serious conversation, he has often returned with his spiritual strength renewed, and better prepared to withstand the contaminating influences by which he was surrounded; with his thoughts turned into a purer channel, and his feelings directed to better objects than those which had engaged them during the day; and now looking back to those occasions from the distance of more than twenty years, he feels as he has ever felt, that to the influence of these

association, under God's blessing, he was deeply indebted for the formation and settlement of his character in those critical years, when so often the mould is struck which shapes the whole future existence. It is no small benefit, at such a period especially, to be brought into connection with those whose influence may be so beneficial; and in this way we see how Sabbath school engagements promote the growth of Christian character.

2. The opportunities they afford of meeting for social prayer might be more specifically noticed; but having already adverted to this point, we will only add, that it has been on these occasions that very many have first ventured to speak *to* God in prayer, and *for* God before their fellow-creatures, —that in these meetings has commenced many a career of public usefulness, which, in its ultimate course, has largely blessed both the church and the world.

3. It is no small privilege to be engaged in the Lord's work. "We are laborers together with God," was the emphatic description which the apostle gave of the work in which he was engaged in proclaiming the gospel of salvation; and who can desire a higher privilege than this, to be allowed in any way, however humble, instrumentally to bring sinners to a knowledge of the truth. It is a labor, too, which brings its own reward, both in the satisfaction it affords, and in the effects which it produces on the hearts of those who, with right motives, are engaged in it. The only other thing we shall here notice is,

4. Seeing something of the results of our labors. Though this is not the ground of our obligation to perseverance in our work, it is a most delightful and effective incentive to it. Every diligent and faithful Sabbath school teacher knows something of it; we are not called to labor and see no benefits result. Every minister and every church can testify, that many have thereby been rescued from the paths of the destroyer, and gathered within the fold of Christ; glorious

and multiplied are the seals which God has put to this work, but the full amount must be left for the day of God to declare. What we see ought to be sufficient to cheer our hearts, to confirm our faith and steadfastness, and by urging to the exercise of the gifts that are in us, confirm and justify the belief that Sabbath school engagements are eminently calculated to promote the growth of Christian character."

CHRISTIANS SHOULD CONVERSE FREELY ON THE SUBJECT OF RELIGION.

"It were much to be hoped by this means [catechetical exercises] that faulty shyness would be overcome, which appears too generally, of discoursing at all about the things of God and the matters of religion, and what men find in their own spirits of savor and impression of such things. It is very strange and unaccountable that there should be so peculiar a shyness in reference to the matters of religion, to discourse of them, especially as to one's own sentiments about them; what one apprehends and feels in his own breast. There is not such a shyness in reference to any other concerns as there is in reference to those concerns that relate to men's souls, and their state toward God and eternity. Nobody is shy to speak of his own or others' acts, for the most part; nobody is shy to speak of an aching head, or an aching tooth; but what a shyness is there to speak of spiritual maladies, a bad heart, a blind mind, and the like! If discourses were in this way more frequently introduced, so as to become familiar, this shyness would be gradually overcome. We find, in public assemblies, it is usual to give an account of things that are of another and most inferior concernment; as in courts of judicature, where persons of the meanest capacity are called frequently to speak their knowledge, to tell what they know about such and such a matter, that

concerns *meum* and *tuum*, this or that man's right; or concerning a question depending between the government and any particular person, concerning a criminal matter. Nothing more ordinary than to have persons catechised about such things in public assemblies; and it is not thought strange. And why should there be a particular shyness, strangeness, and aversion, to give an account of things relating to the kingdom of God? As if it were a criminal thing to have one's mind engaged about matters of that nature, or as if persons were afraid to be thought guilty of religion, as if it were a dreadful thing to be thought guilty of minding God and the concerns of another world."—*Howe, abridged.*

ANOTHER SKETCH OF CHARACTER.*

[The following article will be found interesting and instructive. It contains several important points, such as love for the Sabbath school, constancy of attendance, systematic reading of the Bible, early training, etc., which might be read and enlarged upon with great profit at the Sabbath school concert.]

On the first Sabbath of September, 1843, there was a peculiarly interesting scene in the Tabernacle, at Salem, Mass. Three young men, whose stature and countenance indicated more of the youth than of the man, presented themselves together for a public profession of their faith in Christ. It was an impressive spectacle, although, perhaps, from the increased number of early conversions since the establishment of Sabbath schools, the occasion was remarkable chiefly from the fact that those three were unaccompanied by any others of either sex.

They were all children of the covenant. The youngest of the three, Benjamin Millett, was now a little more than sixteen years old, having been born April 16, 1827.

* See the June number of the Visiter, 1844.

When less than four years old, he was placed in the Sabbath school. There he found a pleasure which, if it did not regularly grow with his growth, never departed from him. He loved his teachers, and was loved by them. For thirteen years and upwards, *he never was absent from the Sabbath school*, unless providentially prevented from attending. It was his testimony, after his conversion, that he had received more good instruction there than any where else; and it was a matter of surprise and grief to him that so many of the young have no more interest in it.

He was carefully taught at home; and if I may speak so freely, it was to his great advantage that he daily heard a mother's prayers for the covenant blessings of the God of Abraham, as well as knelt, morning and evening, at the family altar. If at any time the service was a weariness to him, there can be no question that the purpose was dutifully appreciated, and the prevailing influence was most salutary in guarding him against those "evil communications" which "corrupt good manners." While in many things he would not have been discriminated from his associates, in studies and in amusements, he yet exhibited a very tender and enlightened conscience, was most exemplary in his regard for truth, and generally unyielding in the maintenance of what he believed to be right.

When about six years old, he commenced reading the Scriptures in course, and continued the practice ever afterwards. His familiarity with the Bible, his modest, docile spirit, "his understanding and his answers," made him one of the pleasantest of scholars in the Sabbath school. And when his heart was turned to God with full purpose, his "profiting appeared" in delightful manifestation.

His parents had two children only. When his sister united with the church, he felt as if he were left alone. Yet he found his heart so "hard and impenitent," that it cost him a severe struggle to submit to God and embrace the

gospel. Some months had passed away, during which the enmity of the carnal mind repeatedly demonstrated, that, amiable and moral as he was, he had not become "a new creature in Christ Jesus." And when at last he was humbled as in the dust, it was clearly manifest that his heart smote him at the remembrance of his many sins against God; and that he had felt strongly those evil inclinations and impulses which, when indulged, so often beguile children, even of the most pious parents, into a perilous proximity to absolute demoralization and certain destruction. In fact, there had been times when religious restraints had been felt to be grievous, and not joyous, and when it was happy for him that parental influence was exerted *in command*, as well as counsel, and that appropriate authority was united with love the most tender and faithful, in an inflexible decision. Would that many others had been so trained in the way they should go!

In his convictions of sin and his confession of Christ as all his salvation, he seemed greatly anxious to make thorough work, and not to deceive himself or others. His Bible became his constant companion. It could be said of him most truly, "His delight was in the law of the Lord, and in his law did he meditate day and night. And he was like a tree planted by the rivers of water."

His seasons of secret devotion were very strictly observed. He rose early, sometimes with the dawn, and usually spent from one to two hours in reading the Scriptures, in meditation and prayer. After his health was impaired, through some disorder in the digestive functions of his system, it is not improbable that his strength was materially diminished by the intensity of his devout contemplations.

In hope of recruiting his debilitated constitution, he took passage in a fishing-vessel, at Marblehead, July 6, 1844. He was last heard from on the 6th of October following. While the vessel was on the Banks, he wrote to his friends

several letters, which are now a treasure of comfort and consolation in the sorrows of their bereavement. The witness of those, also, who saw him, and who received from him the purest tokens of his Christian interest in seamen particularly, is now cherished with the greatest satisfaction. He made friends of all, and if he had lived would, doubtless, have been one of the most useful members and brightest ornaments of the church.

In what way the vessel was lost is unknown. There is much reason for the opinion of many, that she was run down in the night, by some one of the numerous merchantmen whose path lies directly across the anchorage of the adventurous fisherman. But however it was that "the inevitable hour" came upon him, we need not have a shadow of a doubt that he "departed to be with Christ; which is far better."

He was of the "sons" who are *as plants grown up in their youth;* the joy of all that pray for the peace of Jerusalem. The God of peace grant that we may see many more such, with those "daughters," also, who are *as corner stones, polished after the similitude of a palace.* L. N. R.

SWAMPSCOT SABBATH SCHOOL.

In the eastern part of Lynn, upon the sea-shore, there is a flourishing village, of about one thousand inhabitants, named Swampscot. In this place there has never been a house of worship. Several attempts have been made to sustain a Sabbath school there; but there having been no minister or church to watch over it, its existence has been brief. Last summer, among the numerous invalids who resorted to this neighborhood for the recovery of health, was Rev. J. Bowen Clark. He proposed preaching to the

people in a school-house, and a goodly number attended. A Sabbath school was now organized, with the most encouraging prospects of being permanent. So much interest has been manifested among the people, that the friends of the enterprise are now erecting a house of worship.

A few weeks since we had the pleasure of spending a Sabbath with this interesting people. The Sabbath school had then been established fifteen Sabbaths. It was held at 9 o'clock in the morning; and it was delightful to see the interest with which the children collected on that cold day. One little lad, we were told, was so anxious to attend and be there in season, that he went without his breakfast. There were present sixteen teachers and one hundred and two scholars; the average attendance has been fourteen teachers and eighty scholars. Most of the scholars are between the ages of five and twelve. Some very small children have ceased to attend since the commencement of cold weather. During those stormy Sabbaths of the autumn, the attendance was about the same as on pleasant days.

When the church is completed, so as to afford room, it is thought the school will be nearly doubled in numbers.

There has been a most striking improvement in the appearance of the school, and its happy influence is already seen and acknowledged by many of the people. The children are quite attentive and orderly, and there can no where be found a hundred children, with more intelligent, sprightly and interesting countenances.

AN AGED AND FAITHFUL TEACHER.

During the past year, we were called to follow to the grave an aged and faithful Sabbath school teacher, with one of her beloved pupils. The teacher, Mrs. Sarah C. Studley, was truly a "mother in Israel." She has long been an

ornament and pillar in the church of Christ, and by her example and influence, a blessing to all with whom she associated. She was a pattern of Christian meekness, humility, faith and love. Naturally endowed with excellent abilities, she had long and faithfully improved them, not indeed in the schools of science and philosophy, falsely so called, but in the school of Christ. The *Bible* was her great book, the closet her school-room, and Christ her great Teacher. At his feet she loved to sit and learn lessons of heavenly wisdom. These were exhibited with peculiar brilliancy in her daily life. She was also a person of much *prayer;* and here, doubtless, lay the secret of her calm, peaceful and happy life, as well as of her triumphant death. She loved his *word* and *people*.

Mrs. Studley became hopefully pious at the age of seventeen, and died March 2d, 1845, in the eightieth year of her age. She was the *first* to put in progress the plan of a Sabbath school in this town, and she remained a teacher, except when interrupted by ill health, till near the close of her long life. Her mind remained clear and strong to the last, seemingly unimpaired. This circumstance, in connection with her kind and lovely disposition, her knowledge of divine truth, and her love to the souls of others, made her an agreeable as well as an instructive teacher, notwithstanding her great age. During the last two years she had the charge, when able, of a class of young ladies, whose high esteem and affection she secured. They felt peculiarly gratified, when they saw her venerable form approaching their class.

One of these pupils was Adeline Vinal, whose death occurred less than one week previous to that of her beloved teacher. She died at the interesting age of eighteen. During her sickness, she spoke particularly of her interest in Mrs. S. as her Sabbath school teacher, though she did not become hopefully pious till within a few weeks of her death. Naturally amiable and lively, like too many, she neglected religion, till, in sickness and the near approach of death, she deeply

felt her need of it. She then regretted that she had spent all her life in *sin*, without doing any thing for Christ and her salvation. She thought much on this subject, and professed to find hope, and pardon, and acceptance with God. She felt that, could her days be prolonged, she would henceforth lead a *Christian life;* and she wished to leave her dying admonition to all her young associates and friends, not to live as she had done,—without religion,—but to begin now to live for heaven. Nearly her last words were, "Come, Lord Jesus; come, Lord Jesus." Both teacher and pupil appeared perfectly calm, peaceful and resigned in death, and have left such evidence of preparation for heaven, as affords ground of strong consolation to surviving relatives and friends.

May the admonition which thus meets the young, almost daily from every side, be heeded and obeyed; and then how greatly might be multiplied the number of those, who, like Mrs. S., after a long and rich Christian experience, enter into rest, leaving the most unquestionable assurance to surviving friends, of their happy eternity. W.

Scituate.

"NO CONVERSIONS DURING THE PAST YEAR!"

A SUPERINTENDENT, in a business letter, dated Dec. 20, writes us:

"Our last Sabbath school concert, for the year 1845, has been holden, and to me it was, in many respects, a *sad meeting*. I wept; and how could I suppress my tears, as the painful thought weighed upon my mind, that all the Sabbaths and Sabbath school privileges and opportunities, for another year, had passed away, and not *one* of the dear youth connected with our school, had given his heart to the Saviour! So deeply did I feel this painful truth, that I wrote the following notice and had it placed in view of all the congregation:

"No conversions in this Sabbath school during the past year!"

I think our teachers seemed to feel that such a startling fact called for more exertion and prayer in this blessed work. And I cannot but hope that my inquiries as to the guilt of such a state of things, and the ones to blame for it, may do my own soul good, and awaken both myself and the teachers to greater zeal and activity for the salvation of our pupils.

In some respects, we have cause for joy. There is manifested in the school, an increasing interest in behalf of Sabbath schools at the West; and I think we have succeeded in instilling a true missionary spirit into the minds of our children, which, I cannot but hope, will "grow with their growth and strengthen with their strength."

With resolutions for greater exertions on my own part, for another year, I have determined to meet my school on new year's day, and make them a short address and present each of them with a new book.

PRAYER FOR SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHERS.

[The following is an extract from an article written several years ago, by a devoted friend of Sabbath schools, who is now, we trust, in heaven. It was originally published in a religious paper at the South, but the appeal comes so warm from the heart, that we wish to give it a wide circulation among the friends of Sabbath schools at the North.]

I have implied that from the altar of our hearts, there should daily arise the incense of prayer; but while I would affectionately exhort to this in general terms, as an imperative and solemn duty, allow me, my dear reader, to suggest one class of individuals as peculiarly in need of your supplications in their behalf. Perhaps the chord I strike may find no response in your soul; but I shall at least have obeyed the dictates of God's own Spirit, in seeking to touch your heart.

Listen, then, while I invite your attention to yonder interesting group. Who are they? and how engaged? They are the inmates of a Sabbath school, and engaged in the study of God's holy word. Led, in their devotions, by one who is no stranger at the throne of grace, they commenced the duties of the day with fervent prayer; and now, with noiseless step, each teacher has found her way to the little sphere of duty, where Sabbath after Sabbath, bears witness to her fidelity, if indeed, she be a true follower of Jesus. You have heard their morning prayer. Draw nearer. Lend, yet again, a listening ear. That teacher is now beseeching her young friends to repent of sin and give their hearts to him who gave himself to death, even the death of the cross, for them. Who are her auditors? Children. Perhaps, Christian parent, you may discern among the youthful group, your own dear children. Now, then, my friend, suffer me, as one united with you, in the best of bonds, even in the bonds of holy love, to ask if your daily prayer arises to God for his blessing upon this truly heaven-born institution? Have you an interest at the throne of grace, and do you, in your approaches thither, remember the Sabbath school teacher? You cannot read her heart. You know not, unless similarly engaged, the abiding sense of solemn responsibility which rests upon, and at times, almost overwhelms her. You need not ask the subject which most employs her thoughts by day and the meditation by night; for I will anticipate your question and reply, "the worth of souls." She has gazed around her and seen the spiritual wants of her young companions. Her eye has indeed affected her heart, and with an humble reliance upon divine grace for aid, she has resolved to devote every energy of her soul to the work of winning souls for Christ.

I say, not that her resolution will be fruitless,—for she has learned to renounce self-dependence, and to lean on Jesus, and she is no stranger to the precious truth, which fell from holy lips, "My grace is sufficient for thee,"—but I do fear-

lessly assert, that the blessing may be long withheld, the seed sown remain long buried, showing no signs of life, because you, fellow-Christian, do not co-operate with her. Let not my appeal, then, reach a deaf ear. O, let the cause of Sabbath schools lead you daily to the mercy-seat, and there,

"Low-bowed before your Maker,"

plead for the outpouring of God's Spirit upon the dear ones assembled in the sanctuary from week to week, whose hearts are still untouched by the soul-stirring truths of the blessed gospel. Take no less humble place, my friend, than the very depths of the valley of humiliation. From thence, look up to the cross, and pray to him who hung thereon, for a new measure of grace, for a new interest in the salvation of the young. They are, emphatically, the hope of the church; and shall they perish because you will not pray? shall their blood be found in the skirts of your garments at the last day? Will no less powerful argument than the voice of wo, from the regions of despair, convince you that in a world of prayer no professing Christian can say, with Cain, "Am I my brother's keeper?"

Seek not thus, I beseech you, my friend, to throw off responsibility. Look around you, and let *your* eye affect *your* heart also. Be not surprised that God's stately steppings are not seen by *us* in his sanctuary. Be not amazed that so few souls are gathered into the fold of Christ from amid the many youth who constitute our Sabbath schools! Jehovah will be inquired of by the house of Israel, and it is prayer that unlocks the golden gates of heaven, and "moves the hand that moves the world;" and until this precious key be in the hands of every one who professes to belong to Jesus, until its value be known and prized, until then will the Sabbath school teacher mourn in secret places, and the souls of the young feel the withering blight of sin; for the dews of heavenly grace descend but in answer to fervent, faithful, *united* prayer.

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THE SABBATH SCHOOL CONCERT.

THE SABBATH SCHOOL AS IT USED TO BE, AND NOW IS.

BY MRS. H. C. KNIGHT.

[*Concluded from page 5.*]

Visit that Sabbath school now, and behold the change. It is called the nursery of the church, and the church is watching over it, and praying for it, and gathering it under the wings of her love. The minister is there; men of piety and prayer are there, laboring unweariedly for the *conversion* of little children. Once it was thought they could understand nothing of the excellence of redemption,—that it was a great thing, beyond their comprehension,—a great thing, afar off, in which they had no part nor lot; now, as the stately distance between parent and child is shortened, and the young heart unfolds beneath a mother's sympathy, we find it does not always carol joyfully; it is sometimes weary and heavy laden, and ready to sink beneath the burden of sin; it sheds bitter and sorrowful tears; it feels its weakness and imperfection, and need of divine help; it yearns for a higher, better, unattained good. The messages of gospel love are then brought to little children, and they are tearfully

entreated to receive them,—yes, and many are found who *do* receive them. It is no strange thing now to behold infant piety, to witness even in childhood the fruits of Christian experience, and the influence of a holy life. O yes, the church is looking towards the Sabbath school, to fill up the places of those who have gone down to the grave. Bands of youth are approaching, well-trained, thoroughly instructed, amply equipped, to stand where their fathers stood, and fight the good fight of faith.

Behold the literature of the Sabbath school, rich and elevated. Hundreds of books are published every year to meet the demands of this new reading public. Early taste and early associations are no longer linked with ghost and goblin; the youthful fancy is no more amused and vitiated with the mysterious powers of an Aladdin's lamp or the fairy's wand; but truth, and duty, and humanity are wrought into children's books; realities are woven into story, possessing a power to influence and to charm, which the vagaries of a wild fiction never yet gained over the young heart. Sabbath school literature possesses an *effective force* all its own; it imparts knowledge, it presents motives, it compels action; it is the literature of moral progress and renewal, not of mental adornment and pleasure.

The Sabbath school is now an *arm* of the church, strong and vigorous. Behold the officer of missions visiting the Sabbath school. He stands up there, describing the desolations of heathen lands, and declares the Bible, with its efficient ministry, their only and sure remedy. "And now, children." he says, "we want to send the Saviour there, and to do it we must have your sympathy and co-operation; you must help on this great and glorious work. There is something for *you* to do; give your money, your prayers, yourselves. A great multitude in those dark lands raise their little hands towards you, from the wheels of Juggernaut, the eddies of the Ganges, the entangled jungle, and cry, 'O come and

save us!' Will you not listen to their moaning, and fly to their rescue?" A response comes, deep and strong, from the mighty heart of childhood. "Help, help!" it cries with ready sympathy. Behold how the children work; one digs, another hoes, a third saws; favorite appetites and accustomed pleasures are cheerfully sacrificed for the silver bit or single penny. They resolve to *do something*, and their ingenuity never slumbers when it has something to accomplish. Hear the chinking of their money, cast from a thousand little hands into the treasury of the Lord! A new and mighty instrument is at work for human good, of which the churches of olden time knew not. The Sabbath school is stretching out its long arm, and planting the blessings of a gospel ministry, and a Christian education, and the Bible and tract, on the waste places of this world; it works with the unchecked ardor of warm, young hearts, and in the vigor of sympathies unblighted by long and sad acquaintance with a heartless world.

The Sabbath school now aims at nothing less than the conversion and sanctification of children. It aims to fashion the child's earliest habits of thought and feeling according to a *Christianized* literature. It aims to do the work of active Christian love. How wonderful its growth, since its first, faint, imperfect birth.

Blessings on the Sabbath school for all it has accomplished, and all it will accomplish, in the great economy of grace! May every pious heart love it, cherish it, pray over it!

Our Religion should not be all Talk.—"People of *little religion* are always *noisy*. He who has not the love of God and man filling his heart, is like an empty wagon coming violently down a hill; it makes a great noise because there is nothing in it."—*Josiah Gregory, quoted by Adam Clarke.*

A NIGHT IN A LOG CABIN.

It was a pleasant afternoon in autumn. Horses were brought to the door well saddled, and a party of three young ladies, who were waiting in readiness, mounted them. Following a man with a loaded team, as guide, we proceeded to the residence of a friend, seven miles distant, on a promised visit.

The path was such (for there was no road) that any light vehicle would have been unsafe, and the only modes of conveyance were by carts and on horseback. After leaving the immediate vicinity of the city, we were in the open country. There were no adjoining towns and villages, as in New England; and in the direction in which we were riding the nearest town was nearly thirty miles distant.

We passed on, over hills, through dense forests of immensely large trees, forded several streams of water, and at length approached a "clearing," and soon after came in sight of a neat, substantial looking log-house, the first dwelling we had seen for nearly six miles. It was just about sunset when we arrived, but not unexpectedly. Three or four little children, who came that whole distance every Sabbath, when the weather would admit, and whose happy faces we weekly saw in the Sabbath school, met us with warm greetings a short distance from the house, and soon the mother and an older sister welcomed us at the door.

After tea, although nearly dark, we walked about the garden, which was neatly enclosed on one side of the house, and admired the surrounding scenery, the wildness and beauty of which would alone have repaid us for the ride. The site, like that of most other residences in the western *country*, had been selected near a little rivulet or spring. This afforded them an abundant supply of the purest water; over it was erected a milk-house or dairy; a "dry-house," for drying

fruits of various kinds, a "smoke-house," "wash-house," "bake-house," or oven, all separate log buildings, together with the barns, completed the little *village*, for such many of the better sort of country establishments at the West appeared to be.

After enjoying the scene a little time, we returned to the house, and the family were soon assembled for evening worship. A daughter, ten or twelve years old, in a sweet voice, read slowly and distinctly a chapter from the Bible, after which the father commended his family, and the friends who shared with them the protection of God, and the common bounties of his providence, to his care and guardianship, and the younger members of the family retired to rest.

Captain and Mrs. H. were well educated, intelligent people. The eldest daughter had enjoyed all the advantages which the best schools in the city could afford, and was now the instructress of her younger brothers and sisters at home. A well furnished library, several fine paintings and maps, with some family portraits, hung against the bare logs, and adorned the rude but neat apartment in which we were sitting. The conversation of our friends was instructive and delightful. They described to us their far off English home, the motives which had induced them, twenty years before, to leave their childhood's home and friends for the beautiful wilderness, which had since become a populous city in Indiana, and then their second retreat to the lovely spot where they now resided. They told us, too, of the blessings and afflictions which had been mingled in their cup in this favored land. Death had taken from them old friends and new. Painful disease for long years rendered the husband and father helpless. Yet now the Lord was smiling upon them; health and strength were restored; and though they might not meet again their loved ones upon earth, they looked forward confidently to a reunion where partings and death are unknown. They were not only blessed abundantly

themselves, but were a rich blessing to those with whom they had intercourse.

The evening was far advanced, and we, too, sought repose for our wearied limbs. The chamber, to which we ascended by a ladder, was a large apartment, the size of both the lower rooms, and, as we thought, *sufficiently airy.* The only windows were two apertures where logs had been sawed off. and boards were placed against them when the weather rendered it necessary. The room was perfectly clean, neatly and comfortably furnished, and though we could, from our beds, count the stars in almost any direction, between the interstices of the logs, we were too much fatigued with our ride long to enjoy the novelty of our situation; and sleep could not have been more sweet and refreshing in the luxurious chamber of a palace than in that rude log cabin.

Before morning we were awakened by the heavy rumbling of thunder, and soon the lightning's flashes rendered every object in the chamber visible. The daughter, who occupied the chamber with us, more used to such emergencies than ourselves, proceeded to make arrangements for our comfort during the shower. Boards were placed securely against the window, basins were set in various places to catch the water, and shield those below from the wet (the beds had been previously guarded), and the sides of the dwelling exposed to the rain were secured by old garments, kept in readiness for such occasions.

We were not inclined to sleep again, for although we were not ourselves exposed to the rain, it came down abundantly all around us. The time was pleasantly passed in conversation, and ere long the rain ceased, the clouds broke away. and daylight gradually appeared through the crevices.

We removed our window-shutters, and finding it almost sunrise, hastened to prepare ourselves for a walk. After guarding our feet from the dampness of the morning, we proceeded to a lofty eminence a short distance from the

house, and about fifteen minutes' climbing carried us to the summit of what our friends termed, "Mount Prospect." And we thought it rightly named; the prospect was truly enchanting. The beautiful Ohio flowed on its course, apparently but just beneath our feet; numerous steamboats and smaller vessels, laden with their multitudes of human beings, were hurrying to and fro upon its mighty waters. In the peaceful and fertile valley upon which we looked down, several beautiful towns and villages had sprung up, as if by magic. We saw the dense mass of buildings in the populous cities of Louisville and New Albany, while the tall spires and neat dwellings of other thriving villages, on either bank of the river, arose in the distance. Here and there a beautiful prairie, dense forests, rivulets, and the log houses of two or three neighbors of Captain H., interspersed the lovely scene. We could not wonder at their taste, which had led them to forsake the noisy, crowded city, for this sweet seclusion. Yet it was not a selfish seclusion. The few neighbors who were scattered within a circuit of two or three miles, already felt the salutary influence of his example; and one evening each week they were accustomed to meet, when the labors of the day were over, the more enlightened and cultivated mind of Captain H. leading their thoughts in appropriate religious exercises, and their voices in sweet songs of praise, while

> "The sounding aisles of the dim woods rang,"

echoing the praises of him who had spread out that beautiful valley, and given them so goodly an heritage.

O it seemed as though we could never tire of feasting our eyes upon such a picture, but a waving handkerchief summoned us to breakfast, for which the active exercise and clear air of the morning had given us sufficiently keen appetites, yet reluctantly we obeyed its call.

It was a complete "*Hoosier*" breakfast. Sweet potatoes, fried ham and eggs, warm biscuit, made of flour of their own

raising, and such as I have never tasted elsewhere, with maple molasses and honey, also products of their own farm, and coffee of the richest flavor, made up the breakfast, which we thought would have tempted even the strictest Grahamite. This meal concluded, Bibles were brought, and we read alternately a few verses till the chapter was concluded, and again we were commended to the care of him who is able to keep and direct.

The visit had been a delightful, and, I trust, not an unprofitable one. We promised to repeat it soon, for the little ones, as we bade them good-by, with glistening eyes assured us, "it was not far, for they went as far every Sabbath." More than ever we loved those dear pupils, and desired that, as Sabbath school teachers, we might be enabled to labor more ardently for Christ in that "nursery of the church," and took our leave, feeling that we should not soon forget that first "night in a log cabin." SELINA.

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

IT is liberty that gives to life its sweetness; and of all liberty the liberty of worshiping God according to the dictates of our own consciences; the liberty of regaling ourselves, and seeking to regale others, at the gospel feast; the liberty of coming away from life's fitful cares, that we may enjoy our Sabbaths and sacraments in "open vision," is incomparably the most precious. On the part of the powers that be, indeed, the extension and maintenance of our civil and religious freedom, are only justice; we owe them nothing as the donors of what they have no right to withhold. But on the part of God it is all mercy; and if he proclaims liberty to the captive, if he gives the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, it is that he might be glorified.

THE SUPERINTENDENT.

The interest and usefulness of a Sabbath school depend, in no small degree, upon the superintendent. If suitably qualified, judicious and energetic in his management, a school with only ordinary teachers, will flourish. He will be an animating spirit, infusing vitality into all its members. But where the superintendent is inefficient and injudicious in his management, the school, as a whole, whatever be the character of its teachers, cannot be interesting and prosperous. In all its movements it will be irregular and languishing.

The office of superintendent is so important, so intimately connected with the prosperity of this institution, that no possible efforts which the circumstances of the incumbent will permit, should be spared in qualifying himself to perform its duties. It is an office worthy to be magnified. Thus it has been and still is regarded, by men of great eminence and distinction.

Some of the *qualifications* desirable in a superintendent, and some of the *duties* of his office, we will now briefly enumerate.

QUALIFICATIONS OF A SUPERINTENDENT.

1. A superintendent should possess habits of strict punctuality and promptness.

2. Evenness of temper, united with firmness and decision of character.

3. In his manners he should be easy, gentle and conciliatory; and in his intercourse with the school, familiar and impartial.

4. He should be a man possessing influence in society, and generally respected and esteemed.

5. He should be a bright example to his school in all that is good;—"he should be fervent, simple, unaffected in prayer.

increasing in a knowledge of the Bible; prompt, liberal, noble in charity, untiring in labors, warm in Christian intercourse, growing in all the Christian graces, and living for the salvation of the earth. Such should be the *superintendent* of a Sabbath school."

DUTIES OF A SUPERINTENDENT.

As to the *duties* of a superintendent, perhaps we cannot make a better specification than that given on the Superintendent's Card, published by the Mass. S. S. Society:

1. In the opening and closing exercises,—whether reading, singing, remarks, or prayer,—be *very brief.*

2. Have the utmost order and decorum through the whole school.

3. Go from class to class, with a word of instruction, advice, encouragement, or admonition, to scholars and teachers.

4. The superintendent should make himself perfectly familiar with the lesson.

5. He should become acquainted with the teachers,—their characters, qualifications, fidelity, and methods of communicating instruction, and illustrating truth.

6. He should learn the *names of the scholars*,—always meet them with exhibitions of affectionate interest,—notice all absences, and the next Sabbath go round to each and learn the cause,—and keep a record of every thing encouraging or otherwise, respecting each member of the school.

7. Daily study ways and means, and *weekly make thorough preparations*, to give variety to the exercises, and secure the highest interest and efficiency of the school.

8. Devise plans to enlist the scholars in the cause of missions, temperance, and all the objects of benevolence.

9. The superintendent should feel and manifest a deep interest in the teachers' meeting and the concert.

The possession of these qualifications, and the faithful performance of these duties, will make a *good* superintendent.

BOSTON MATERNAL ASSOCIATIONS.

The united annual meeting of the Congregational Maternal Associations of this city was held on the last Wednesday of October. The Report, which was prepared by Mrs. Mary Whiton, was read by Rev. Mr. Blagden, and an address was made to the children by the Secretary of the Mass. S. S. Society.

"Through the kind providence of the great Head of the church," says the Report,—"we have been brought to a period when it becomes our duty to review God's dealings with us, as presented in the reports of the several Maternal Associations connected with our denomination in this city. We trust it may be instrumental in awakening us to a more heartfelt sense of our responsibilities as mothers, as members of the several Associations here represented. But our hearts are not gladdened by statements from our various Associations, of such results as have been developed by the reports that have sometimes cheered us in former years. Though, through the merciful dealings of our heavenly Father, we have been called to mourn the departure of but few mothers from the scenes of earthly labors and responsibilities, or the removal of few children, yet we have not been called to rejoice over our offspring, as over sinners that have repented. We have not seen them pressing forward to subscribe with their own hands, and seal with their own seals, the covenant into which they have been baptized. That the present low state of religious feeling among our churches has not been without its influence upon our Maternal Associations, will be apparent as we quote such extracts as we deem of interest from the reports presented. Our prayers have not been answered. Is it because we have asked amiss?"

After brief extracts from all the Congregational Associations in the city, excepting three, giving an account of the additions, deaths, general state of the Associations, &c., the Report concludes:—

"It will be seen from the Associations here represented, that the Holy Spirit, with his converting influence, has not been among us, except in one or two instances. Yet, let us not faint in this labor of love for the souls of our dear children. If we are faithful to the precious trust the great Head of the church has committed to us, who can tell but that, when this cloud of darkness which now rests upon the churches, shall have passed away before the bright beams of the Sun of righteousness, these Associations may be the first that shall feel the sweet breathings of the Holy Spirit.

"If there are any mothers present, who come with us to the sacramental board, who have brought their little ones to the baptismal font, and there covenanted to bring them up for the Lord, and as yet have not availed themselves of this inestimable privilege [of uniting with the Maternal Association], to such we would say, Come with us, and let us mingle our prayers together to Israel's God. Let us plead for our offspring as children of the covenant; watch and pray for their conversion; be instant in season and out of season, and God will pour his Spirit upon our seed, and his blessing upon our offspring."

EXTRACTS FROM REPORTS.

We here give a few *condensed* extracts from several of the reports. From one report it appears that the meetings have been comparatively well attended, and a larger number of young mothers than usual, have united with the Association.

Another report says,—Our meetings have been well attended, and we feel that the interest has been increased, by the introduction of *Newcomb's Manual for Maternal Associations*, published by the Mass. Sabbath School Society, as an aid and guide in our counsels and deliberations; and as such, we most cordially recommend it to the sister Associations, believing it to be an auxiliary peculiarly appropriate for our monthly meetings. The children's contributions have amounted to ten dollars and eighty cents.

Another report states that there has been an increased interest in attending the monthly meetings. Although more of a spirit of prayer prevailed in most of the meetings, and there were often encouraging indications of the presence of the Holy Spirit, yet only one of the children remembered at the meetings, has made a profession of religion during the year, and he is studying for the ministry, though there are some other cases of hope. There is a vacant seat in our circle, which reminds us of one who has been with us from the beginning,—one whose piety and whose prayers we would emulate,—one who lived so near her Saviour, that, when the hand of death was upon her, and reason was dethroned, she exclaimed, "O, I see the Saviour—He is dressed in flowing robes, and I am nestling in the folds."

Another Association reports that, although there has been a smaller average attendance than in the preceding year, and, although the Holy Spirit has to a great extent been withheld, yet they are encouraged by the assurance, that there are mothers among them who are praying and looking for the conversion of their children, and pleading that God would remember his covenant. And some of the children, it is hoped, have entered the fold of the good Shepherd.

Another report speaks of abundant room for gratitude that their meetings have been sustained with so good a degree of interest. A beloved member has been removed by death. In the winter of 1840 and 1841, she was led to consecrate herself and children more entirely to the Lord, having an increased desire that they might be early brought into the fold of Christ; and from that time to her death, she was in the daily habit of praying with them. For fear of interruption, she would rise in the morning, before any other member of the family, to hold secret communion with her heavenly Father. At the last, though called suddenly, she was prepared, and expressed perfect confidence that she should soon be with the Saviour.

A son of one of the members of our Association, since our last report, has departed this life. He was a child of many prayers, and from his earliest infancy was solemnly dedicated to God. He was a member of the Sabbath school for many years, and was often present with his mother at the quarterly meetings of this Association. After he left home, to pursue his collegiate and professional studies, he retained a lively interest in the scenes of his youth, and especially in the spiritual prosperity of his early associates. He was a young man of bright promise, and his numerous friends had hoped that his valuable life might be long spared, that he might be widely useful in the Christian ministry, to which he had consecrated himself with singular simplicity and devotedness. But it has pleased his Master and ours, to remove him to a higher sphere of service, in the very freshness and beauty of the morning of his days. 'That life is long, which answers life's great end.'

An incident of especial interest to the members of this Association, took place on one of the last days of his life. Although he was then laboring under extreme bodily debility and exhaustion, and was very soon to enter upon the all-absorbing scenes of eternity, he recollected that *that* was the day of the quarterly meeting of this Association, and inquired whether his mother had not gone to the meeting? This simple incident shows that, though many years had elapsed since he was directly connected with the Association, he had by no means forgotten the impressions he had received from it in his earliest days; and it should operate as a precious encouragement to all mothers to be faithful to their children, inasmuch as the fruits of that fidelity will not all be matured and exhibited till our offspring have reached their majority and entered upon the duties of active life.

SABBATH SCHOOL IN LEOMINSTER.

The following brief sketch of the Sabbath school in Leominster, contains two facts of special interest, viz., the unusually large proportion of the congregation connected with the school, and the excellent average attendance.

The school embraces one hundred and ninety scholars and twenty-six teachers, and the average attendance of scholars, on pleasant Sabbaths, is one hundred and sixty. The school is large, compared with the congregation. There is one class of elderly gentlemen, two of elderly ladies, one of young gentlemen and four of young ladies. Indeed, most of the congregation are connected with the school, although all the members of but few families can be present on the same Sabbath.

This school has used most of the Question Books of the Society, and has generally manifested much interest in them. The lessons, and at least one of the references to each question, are generally committed to memory by the scholars, and most of the teachers appear interested in their work. Great harmony and kindness of feeling prevail among the members of the school.

A meeting for the examination of the lesson is conducted by the pastor once in two weeks. All the people are invited to attend, though the meetings are designed for the special benefit of the teachers.

Fourteen individuals, in this place, have been constituted life-members of the Mass. S. S. Society; and during the past year the school has contributed to the Society, for the cause of Sabbath schools at the West, thirty dollars, and also many of their second-hand books.

A Sabbath school like the above, in connection with every religious society, must be an important auxiliary to its enlargement and prosperity. It must help to strengthen the hands of the pastor and of pious parents, and open an inviting field of labor to all those who would render themselves useful in the vineyard of our Lord.

READING FOR THE YOUNG.

It was the advice of Paul, the aged, to Timothy, a young man, to "give attendance to reading." What books did the apostle recommend to his scholar? We have almost envied Timothy the facility with which he could make his selection, and reduce the advice to immediate practice. There were then but very few books which were suitable for a Christian, and but one in which he could be exhorted to meditate day and night. But that was able to make the reader wise unto salvation, and that doubtless was the book to which Timothy understood the apostle to refer. It was the Holy Scriptures which this young man had known from his childhood, and which he resolved to make the man of his counsel through life.

We would that every young person would understand us to refer to the Bible, when we exhort them to give attendance to reading, and would go to the word of God for instruction, with as much faith and love as this young disciple. If there were no other book in the world, this would make them truly wise. No book is so deeply interesting,—no book is so salutary in its influence upon the whole mind,—no book is so essential to a perfect education,—as the Bible.

Where will you find narratives of such thrilling power as in the Old Testament? Where will you meet with scenes of such awful grandeur, as those described in the history of God's dealing with his ancient people? Where does majesty appear in such splendor as in the reign of Solomon? What history so important for the right understanding of all other history, as that of Jesus? What poetry can compare with that of the sweet Psalmist of Israel? Where does the sorrow of a broken heart pour itself out in words of such power, as in those of Job and Jeremiah? What biography is so instructive, so purifying, so elevating, as the life of him who "spake as never man spake," and lived as never man

lived? What human exposition so invites and rewards the profound study of the theologian, the philosopher, and the logician, as the Epistle to the Romans? Every part of the Bible is divine. Every page shines with the wisdom of God. No one can read it with a right spirit without profit, and he who makes it the guide of his conscience will become wise unto salvation. For "it is perfect, converting the soul; sure, making wise the simple; right, rejoicing the heart; pure, enlightening the eyes; clean, enduring for ever; true and righteous altogether; more to be desired than gold, sweeter than honey and the honey-comb; by it we are warned, and in keeping its precepts there is great reward." We will say, in the words of the divine Herbert:

"O book! infinite sweetness! let my heart
Suck every letter; and a honey gain,
Precious for any griefs in any part,
To clear the breast, to mollify all pain.
Thou art all health; health thriving till it make
A full eternity. Thou art a mass
Of strange delights, where we may wish and take.
Ladies, look here: this is the thankful glass
That mends the looker's eyes: this is the well
That washes what it shows. Who can endear
Thy praise too much? Thou art heaven's lieger here,
Working against the states of death and hell.
Stars are poor books, and oftentimes do miss;
This book of stars lights to eternal bliss."

We have somewhat more to say respecting the reading of the young, which we defer until next month.

ADDRESS TO A PARENT.

Are you a *parent?* Then God has added much to your weight of responsibility. Immortal souls are entrusted to your keeping. In relation to each of your children, God hath said, "Take this child, and nurse it for me." Much,

very much, does it depend upon the course you pursue at the head of your family, whether your house shall be a sanctuary of love, gentleness, piety, and peace, where the Saviour, should he again dwell with men, would delight to abide,—or, whether it shall be an abode of strife, misrule, disobedience and tumult; where fallen spirits, if permitted to become incarnate, would love to congregate. Permit me affectionately to inquire, parent, what is your *example?* Children are imitative beings. Their general resemblance to their parents in countenance is not more striking than in conversation and deportment. Is the parent addicted to petulance, anger, rash words? You may assuredly calculate on seeing all these evil passions growing and ripening into a plentiful harvest in the children. And soon, if not already, you will hear sounds of discord and bitterness proceeding from them.

> "The Spirit like some peaceful dove,
> Flies from the realms of noise and strife."

That parent, who, for the sake of producing present effects, is in the habit of deceiving his children with promises or threatenings which he never fulfils, is training up a brood of dissemblers, whose lips will speak guile and deceit long after his own are sealed in death. That father who spends his Sabbaths in slumber, or reading political papers, or roving abroad, or at work in his shop or field, instead of reading the Bible and visiting the sanctuary, is training his children to look upon the Bible as a fable and religion as a dream. O parent, would you wish your example to be a living preacher of righteousness to your children while you live, and a subject of grateful recollection to them when you are dead? See, then, that your speech is pure, your temper gentle, your actions consistent, your whole life from day to day, a model of whatsoever things are just, pure, lovely, and of good report.

Permit me to inquire further, what is your *family government?* Are you decided in the maintenance of order,

ruling well your own house, having your children in subjection with gravity? Children who go unrestrained in youth, —who know not what it is to bow to authority, or to have their inclinations crossed, when they grow up to manhood, will be very likely to become turbulent members of society,— reckless of law, and the ringleaders of mobs.

The parent who rules his own house will seek for early and useful employment for his children. No greater misfortune can happen to a lad of ten years, than to be turned into the streets with nothing to do but to work mischief as he may have opportunity.

Are you watchful over your children's attendance, behaviour, and progress in school? *How* and *where* are their evenings spent? When, as you are about to retire to your slumbers, your ears are saluted with an uproar in the streets as horrid as if an host of savages were sacking the town, can you say in truth, "I am thankful that my son is not among them." And when, as the morning comes, you listen to the sad tale of a nocturnal riot in some dirty tippling shop, have you the satisfaction to know that your boy slept quietly in his bed through the night? O parent, little do you dream of the many traps that are laid to ensnare and ruin your children while away from your eye, and under the cover of darkness? As you value the peace of your family and the salvation of your children, never rest easy without knowing *where* and with *whom* they spend their evenings when away from your own fireside.

Let me here inquire, *Have you a family altar?* Ah, my friend, this is the key-stone in the arch on which rests the blessedness of the family state. I never knew a well disciplined household without it. Morning and evening prayer, accompanied with reading the Scriptures, gives dignity and respect to the head, adds weight to his injunctions, keeps up order, allays unruly passions, and above all, honors God in the presence of the family, and carries their thoughts upward

to the judgment and the retributions of eternity. I ask again, *Have you a family altar?* If not, how can you live any longer exposed to that "fury" which God has said he "will pour upon the families who call not upon his name?" On this very day, fearlessly come up to the work and do your duty.

As a parent, what interest do you feel in the *religious training of your children?* Are they all members of the Sabbath school or Bible class? Is it your habit to see that they are prepared with their lessons, and that none of them withdraw their attendance without your permission?

Is it your custom to take your children with you regularly to the sanctuary, and to give them a seat where *your eye can be upon them?* O the cruel mistake of those parents who suffer their children to rove abroad to any place of worship where fancy or folly may draw them, or to congregate in some by-corner in the gallery to converse and make merry with jovial companions. What an outrage upon decency,—how contemptuous to the God of order! Parent, can you say that your child was never guilty of disturbing a congregation in time of worship? T. S.

ELEMENTS OF SUCCESS.

[The following extracts from the life of Miss Susan Bowler, just published by the Methodist Sabbath School Union, exhibit the true elements of a Sabbath school teacher's success:]

1. *Her high appreciation of the office of a Sabbath school teacher.* It was not a matter of ordinary moment with her that she had in charge the highest interests of several immortal souls. As, at first, she was almost overwhelmed with a sense of her insufficiency, and deeply felt her indispensable need of the promised help from on high; so, during the whole period of her connection with the class, was she sen-

sibly alive to the solemn responsibilities of her station, and full of prayerful anxiety that he, whose grace alone was sufficient for her, would strengthen her in the discharge of her duties. Sabbath after Sabbath her diary is filled with earnest intercessions for present grace, and her zeal seemed rather to quicken than grow cold, as the period of her office was extended.

> "'Tis not a cause of small import
> The teacher's care demands;
> But what might fill an angel's heart,
> And filled a Saviour's hands.
> They watch for souls, for whom the Lord
> Did heavenly bliss forego!
> For souls, who must for ever live
> In raptures or in wo."

"Felt this morning," she writes in her diary, Sabbath morning, "that I needed much of the mind of Christ, that I might, as I ought, perform the duties of the day, and as I shall wish I had when I come to reflect upon them. Prayed, before going to the teacher's class, that I might have much of the mind and spirit of my Redeemer. Class more than usually interesting. . . . . Felt, before going to the Sabbath school, that I must have the special assistance of the grace of God. Called upon the Lord (mentally), during the exercises, for his blessing on my instructions, and tried to exercise faith in his promises. . . . The Lord knows my heart, that I have a desire to feed his lambs; but, to accomplish this, I need grace, above all things."

"I thank God that he has given me the affections of my class, and that I love and feel interested in them to such a degree, that I would be willing to sacrifice ease and comfort if I could do them good. . . . . I long to feel more for the Sabbath school; though I trust God has accepted the hearts of all my class, and they can rejoice in him, yet there are others in the school still unreconciled to him. Can I do

them no good? Lord, help! I feel much for the class next to mine, as some of them were formerly my scholars. Nothing would rejoice my heart so much as to see them converted. . . . . Went to Sabbath school with the same anxiety I have of late felt, that I might do good. One of my class took up the class-book, and, looking at her name, remarked that she had been in my class for two years, and hoped she should be for two years to come. It encouraged my heart; for the knowledge of the affections of every member of my class leads me to hope that it is for a wise purpose that God has given me their love, that I may do them much more good than I have ever done."

At the close of another Sabbath she writes:

"Have I done all my duty? Can I look back upon my interview with my class, and feel that I have said all I could say,—that I have set them an example worthy of imitation? Thank God! they have all tasted of his goodness; but is my duty done? Can I stop here with a clear conscience? . . . . Went to the Sabbath school feeling that I had no strength of my own; the grace of God is alone sufficient to accomplish the great work of bringing the children to love and obey Christ. . . . Was appointed to-day to superintend the infant school. Felt quite homesick; wanted to get back to my class, yet feel willing to make the sacrifice if I can be more useful. Was tried when I found only one of the teachers in the infant class a professor of religion. O that God would bring the teachers to repentance!"

In a time of revival in the school she writes:

"Five of my class have found the Lord; two others are seeking him; and one says, 'She needs religion, but is not prepared to seek it now.' O that she might have space for repentance! I feel that I have a great work to do, to lead these souls to heaven, and need the assistance of God; indeed I must have it, or fail. I need, above all things, a holy heart.

"I feel very anxious that I may be enabled to glorify God to-day,—speak for the Saviour in the Sabbath school. O that he would use me as an instrument to advance his cause! May he specially apply the word I may speak to the heart of Mary N——. She is the only one in the class who has not found the Lord to be precious. I hope some word, fitly spoken, may sink with deep weight into her heart, and she be led to the Saviour."

We will give but one more extract:

"What has God wrought for the month past? When I was appointed superintendent of the infant department in the Sabbath school, I said, 'Lord, how can I go forward in my duty, for the teachers are not professors of religion, and will not be helpers in the great work?' But now all have found the Lord. How little faith I had in God! Help me, ever blessed Saviour, to believe thou art able and willing to save, even to the uttermost. I desire to feel more for others, that I may constantly pray and labor in the vineyard of the Lord."

REVIVAL IN A BIBLE-CLASS.

In 1841 there was a revival of religion in a small missionary church in Maine, as fruits of which some fifteen or twenty individuals made a public profession of their faith in Christ. This revival commenced in a Bible-class, taught by the pastor, in connection with the study of the Scripture Questions on the Epistle of Paul to the Romans. As the class proceeded to consider the fifth lesson, "*God will judge men according to their moral characters, and not by their religious privileges or professions*," the pastor felt unusually solemn. Soon a deep solemnity pervaded the class, and the members were so much affected, that they were unable to answer the questions. The pastor then closed the

book, and began to address them on the scenes of the judgment, and the interests of their souls. A revival at once commenced, and every impenitent member of that class of thirty was hopefully converted. The revival extended to the Sabbath school, in which many of the members of the Bible-class were teachers. This class, which was held on a week-day evening, spent *two years* on the Question Book on Romans, holding a meeting every week. And all the members have ever since felt a special interest in that portion of the word of God.

SABBATH SCHOOL BOOKS FOR TEXAS.

An elder in the Presbyterian church, in Western Texas, has made very urgent appeals to the Mass. S. S. Society, "for a *donation* of their valuable publications," for Sabbath schools in that country. He also appeals to all the friends of the Society to aid in this work. "Many Sabbath schools," he says, "embracing numbers of Catholic children, might soon be established and sustained, if they could obtain suitable books." New and second-hand books, Bibles and Testaments, are wanted. *Who* will aid the Society in answering this urgent application? What individuals? What Sabbath schools? What churches?

The Choctaws.—The Western (Miss.) Banner represents the condition of affairs in the Choctaw Nation as quite prosperous. There are now four female boarding-schools, sustained principally by the funds of the Nation, but under the care and instruction of the missionaries. There are other schools, containing 250 pupils. There are, also, various Sabbath schools, taught by Choctaw teachers, embracing six or seven hundred adults and children.

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THE SABBATH SCHOOL CONCERT.

A TEACHER SOWING AND REAPING.

["He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." This passage is beautifully illustrated in the following experience of a teacher. We have, in the experience of this teacher, as we had in an article in our last, the "*elements* of success," and the *success* also.]

Among the various causes of benevolence to which the Christian has pledged support, none have more deeply interested my own feelings, than the Sabbath school. Though humble in its pretensions, it nevertheless has proved "mighty through God to the pulling down of many strong holds" of the prince of darkness.

That teacher, who, with untiring diligence, "goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." A young lady in the same school with myself had a class of little girls. She loved them much, and they clung to her with all the warmth and ardor of childhood's love, for *children* always reciprocate affection, if properly manifested.

This teacher left her home, and parted with that little

class, and a sad parting it was. In the female seminary of which she became a member, the charge of several young ladies was assigned to her. She entered upon her new duties with great fear and trembling. Having a pious roommate, *her* prayers were enlisted that her humble efforts for their conversion might not be unavailing. They resolved to make one individual the subject of prayer and effort for two successive weeks, until each had been chosen. They prayed in their closets and unitedly, until their faith was greatly strengthened and a love for souls kindled in their hearts, such as they had never known before. They felt like Jacob of old, that they *could not* be denied the blessing. But Miss —— did not leave her pupils with the closet. They were a constant burden upon her spirits. She embraced every opportunity for personal conversation upon the importance of *immediate* attention to the salvation of their souls. When conversation was impracticable, she addressed them a note of tender and earnest expostulation. Her humble exertions were seen in heaven. The Lord listened and heard the groanings of her spirit. One expressed a trembling hope that her name was written in the "Lamb's book of life." *Her* prayers were then requested for her impenitent companions. One after another was rejoicing in the hope of pardoned sin, until at the close of a six months' term, all but one returned to their homes with joy, that they had found the "pearl of great price." That *one* has since enrolled her name with the people of God.

Miss —— was at length called to the responsibilities of a wife and mother, but her love for the Sabbath school abated not. Scarcely was she settled in her new home, before she was found within its sacred enclosure. Her husband was appointed superintendent, and this to her was a new incentive to effort. She invited the female teachers to meet at her house for a weekly prayer-meeting in behalf of their respective classes. Her husband was a man of uncommon

piety, whose *closet* as well as the family altar, bore daily witness to his earnest pleadings that the Lord would appear clothed with salvation for the Sabbath school. It was soon found that "praying breath is never spent in vain." An unusual solemnity pervaded the whole school. *Here* was seen the tear of penitence fast flowing from the eye of a little girl. *There*, a lad, whose utterance was choked with sobs, asking, "How shall I get a new heart?" And the deep sigh and anxious expression of older pupils told that *they too* felt that their eternal all was at stake. The little prayer meeting of perhaps eight or ten, was increased to overflowing. In eternity it may be seen that the prayers which ascended from that circle of teachers, was intimately connected with the salvation of many of those pupils.

But "passing away" is written upon every thing earthly. A sad change came over the bright and joyous home of this teacher. He with whom she loved to associate in the delightful duties of the Sabbath school, closed his earthly labors and went to his home in heaven. She became a widow and her children fatherless. For a time

> "Her soul was like a broken lyre,
> Whose fondest, sweetest chord is gone."

But the "healer" was there. He gave her "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." She removed to her early home and again entered the Sabbath school. She looked for her class of little girls. *Several* were yet there, and though they had ripened into womanhood, no change had come over their spirits, save that the love of Jesus glowed in the hearts of all but one. They sought *her* again as their teacher, and who shall tell the emotions with which she stood before her *first* class of little girls, grown to maturity, mingling their tears with hers, and pouring balm of tender sympathy into her torn and bleeding bosom.

The class of which she now took charge, including these

several members of her former class, numbered nine. Her first object, on entering the class, was to ascertain how many were hopefully pious. Some being still unconverted, she requested the pious members to unite with her in prayer, at stated seasons, that they too might be numbered among the chosen of God. She then endeavored, on each Sabbath, to select some questions or point in the lesson as the subject of practical remark, and as often as opportunity offered, converse with each freely with regard to their own personal feelings. When this could not be done, they have been, one at a time, invited to visit her at her own home, and when this has failed, familiar notes of inquiry into their spiritual interests have been addressed them, and an answer solicited.

All but two of her class of nine are now hopefully pious. She loves them most ardently, and her affection is apparently reciprocated. They are punctual in their attendance, and *but one case of tardiness has occurred during the two years of her connection with the class.* Their lessons are thoroughly studied, and in most instances the references are either recited as a whole, or an answer deduced from them, without opening the Bible. When the question will admit of *several* answers, it is proposed in the form of a topic, and those who can say any thing upon it raise their hand. A monthly contribution is taken up for destitute Sabbath schools, at the West.—The labors of the Sabbath school are often spoken of as a self-denial; but if *these* are self-denials, she could wish that her *whole life* might be but one continued scene of such labor.

C. G.

One of the most serious evils connected with our Sabbath school, and with Sabbath schools generally, appears to me to be, a want of a due sense of responsibility on the part of teachers. Hence they do not labor enough with a special reference to the conversion and salvation of the souls of those committed to their charge; and any thing which may be done to increase this sense of responsibility, will be conferring a great spiritual good on this institution.

Pastor.

THE DEACON'S FIRESIDE....NO. I.

Deacon Oldschool.—"I didn't see you at meeting, last Sabbath afternoon, brother E. Any of your family sick?"

Mr. E.—"No, I was over in the Hollow to hear Mr. N. preach."

Dea. O.—"Mr. N. is one of the Millerite preachers, I believe?"

Mr. E.—"I guess he agrees with Mr. Miller in doctrine. I believe he calls himself a Free Will Baptist."

Dea. O.—"I suppose you had Scripture authority for leaving the sanctuary in which the church to which you belong, worship?"

Mr. E.—"Yes, my Bible tells me to 'prove all things and hold fast that which is good.' Now how can I tell whether a doctrine is good or not, if I don't hear it? And if our minister wont have the doctrine preached in his pulpit, I must go where it is preached, or I can't hear it, that's certain. Besides, I am one of your liberal men who are willing to hear what may be said on both sides. I think, Deacon, you are a little too set in your way—you stick a little too close to the old track."

Dea. O.—"It may be that I am. Let us consider the matter, and reason about it, and see if we can find out just what is right—that is the point to aim at. The question ought to be, not what will make us popular, not what will make people call us liberal, but what is right. Now let us consider the passage of Scripture which you quoted. The inference which you draw from it is, that you are at liberty to leave the house of God, whenever a new doctrine is advertised which our minister don't see fit to have published from the pulpit. Now there are scores of sectarians whose doctrines you never heard. Suppose one should preach in the Hollow every Sabbath forenoon, and another every Sabbath afternoon, for a year; for there are enough of them to

do it, for their name is legion. According to your interpretation of the passage you quoted, you would be bound to prove them all, and in order to do this, you would be obliged to absent yourself from the body with whom you have covenanted to worship, all the year."

Mr. E.—"Ah, but such a case will never happen."

Dea. O.—"I grant that, but I was showing you where your principles would lead you if carried out. A man who talks about 'proving all things' must stick to principles."

Mr. E.—"To go once in a while, and hear what a stranger has to say, is a very different thing from going all the time."

Dea. O.—"I know it is, but I was showing you that on your principles you would be obliged to go, and hear every stranger. I conclude that would not be right, and hence I conclude the principle is not true."

Mr. E.—"But, Deacon, it looks very illiberal, I may say, bigoted, never to go to hear any body but your own minister preach. I heard them talking about it at the public house the other day, and they said, Dea. Oldschool would have more influence if he was a little more liberal."

Dea. O.—"I think it is likely they say harder things than that about me in the bar-room sometimes, but I'm not there to hear it. And I consider it more important to have regard to the word of God, and my covenant obligations, and the feelings of my minister, and my brethren, than to what is said of us in taverns or any where else. I do not consider that I reverence the sanctuary if I absent myself willingly from my brethren in the house of God on the Sabbath. I do not think that I treat my minister well, if after he has perhaps prepared a discourse with especial reference to my necessities, he finds I am not in my place to hear it. That I may be amused or have my curiosity gratified better elsewhere, is no reason why I should leave my place in the house of God."

Mr. E.—"O, I think in general we ought to attend our own place of worship. But I think you carry the matter a little too far. We ought not to be so set in our way that we cannot hear any but those of our own order."

Dea. O.—"That is not what we were talking about. We were considering the propriety of leaving the house of God on the Sabbath, to listen to the blowing of every new wind of doctrine. As to hearing those of another order, when I lived where there was no Congregational society, I always worshiped in the Baptist church in the place, and helped support the minister. When Elder P. comes through here he always stays with me. But if he were to come and try to get up a church here, I do not think that liberality would require me to leave my own minister."

Mr. E.—"It seems to me that there is too much of the spirit which Christ rebuked in his disciples, when they told him they forbade him because he followed not us."

Dea. O.—"I agree with you that there is too much of that spirit in the world. But I do not believe that adhering to the sanctuary, and refusing to run after every one who pretends he has discovered something new, is a proof that one is actuated by that spirit. You wont deny that there are a great many going up and down in the land forming new sects, who had better be at work on their farms or in their shops."

Mr. E.—"There are some such, I suppose."

Dea. O.—"You wont deny that they do a great deal of mischief, by filling men's heads with strange notions, and thus turning them aside from the truths which are able to make them wise unto salvation—causing others to believe that there can be no certainty in the Bible, when so many strange doctrines are professedly drawn from it,—by weakening the hands of the regular, hard-working, educated ministry. Now do not those who run after them aid them in doing this mischief? If none of the members of our

churches went to hear them, they would have a great deal less encouragement than they have now."

Mr. E.—"I confess there is a good deal in what you say, but I don't relish this hearing only one side. In the nineteenth century men ought not to be afraid to hear all that can be said in favor of any doctrine."

Dea. O.—"Suppose a man should come along professing to be a natural philosopher, and giving out that he could prove that the law of gravitation was false, and that the earth was immovable; do you think a natural philosopher would be under obligations to go and hear him? and would he deserve to be reproached for illiberality if he should refuse to do so? Would it be right to say to him that he was afraid to hear what could be said against his doctrines? Not at all. He could be better employed than in listening to the ignorance of the pretender. And so those who have the Bible, and an intelligent ministry to attend upon, can be better employed than in listening to the Mormon, or Millerite, or any other *ite* that Satan sends along to hinder the effect of the gospel. J. A.

Williams College.

SKETCH OF THE SABBATH SCHOOL IN HAVERHILL.

The Centre Sabbath school in Haverhill was organized in July, 1834, and numbered 184 members. Only 19 of all these are now in the school. Of the original number about 40 were professors of religion. Of the remainder about 60 give credible evidence of having been converted while connected with the school. Of the 90 males originally connected with the school, only two remain at present; these are the superintendent and secretary. They have held their respective offices during the whole period. Of the 94 females, 17 remain, of whom 5 were teachers. During this

period, the average number of deaths, out of the 184, has been about one each year. The monthly contributions of the school have amounted in all to something more than 130 dollars.

These facts have impressed my mind with the following truths:

1. *The visible benefits of the Sabbath school institution.* From the pennies which they would otherwise have expended for trifles, the scholars have saved $130, or more, for the purpose of doing good. Sixty give evidence of having passed from death unto life; i. e., almost one-half of the original number of the unconverted scholars. Then there is the silent, restraining influence that has operated, and still operates, on those who have not become Christians,—no unimportant part of the benefits of Sabbath schools.

> "What 's done we barely may compute,
> We know not what 's resisted."

Even this result is encouraging, though it is by no means so great as the record of many schools may show.

2. *We notice the special favor of God in regard to the life of those who have attended our school, and thus have kept the Sabbath.* Only about one has died yearly, though the average number of deaths in 180, according to the common proportion of deaths in the world, would be more than three times that number. Does not this fact illustrate the Scripture, "With long life will I satisfy him [the righteous], and will show him my salvation?" May we not plead this as an encouragement for children to attend Sabbath school?

3. *We infer the mutability of earthly things.* In eleven short years, the school has almost entirely changed. Eleven years hence, who shall be the surviving teachers and scholars? And of those who leave, how many shall go to heaven? In view of this, what is the manifest duty of teachers?

4. *Of the two, males are more changeable in schools than females.* Boys, then, in the Sabbath school, should receive special and immediate attention. What thou doest for them must be done quickly.

5. *In the Sabbath school, as in other religious privileges and duties, females are the most constant.* "Last at the cross,—first at the sepulchre." Generally they are more hopeful subjects of religious influence than men; they are more willing to attend to the subject.

6. From the facts stated above with regard to the superintendent, secretary and teachers, we draw this important conclusion:—*They are the most constant attendants upon the Sabbath school who have the most labor and responsibility in it.* God not only gives them strength equal to their day, but makes their very labor pleasant. Even Christ's yoke is easy and his burden light.

For the last year we report of our school two deaths and no conversions! More deaths than usual, and fewer conversions than ever! H.

Perhaps this is true of some other Sabbath schools. Will the teachers ask themselves before God, why there are so few conversions in their classes? Will the scholars, who have had faithful instruction the past year, but are not yet converted, ask themselves, why they have not been converted? Will both pray God that it may never be so at the close of another year?

Sketches of God's doings in our Sabbath schools, like the above, would enable us to gather general principles, of great value. No one can read them without interest and profit.

"The Sabbath school teacher should recollect that every child that comes into the school brings *five* things with him; viz., intellect, conscience, affections, a will and hopes; and all depraved, misplaced, unemployed. He should aim to find something to set over against each of these; truth for the intellect, the atonement for the conscience, God for the affections, grace for the will, and glory for the hopes."

RELIGION A MATTER OF CALCULATION.

[The teachers of the advanced classes will find the following article suitable to be read and considered at the close of their lesson, or at a private meeting of their classes, if they are accustomed to hold such meetings.]

My attention was arrested, some time since, by the remark, that "Religion is eminently a matter of calculation." Is it indeed so? Why, calculation implies consideration, judgment and forethought, and leads to certain results. It involves the exercise of the highest powers of mind, and the patient and deliberate judgment of consequences; and distinguishes the prudent man, who makes it the basis of his conduct, from the inconsiderate, who sets its principles at defiance. If religion be of this character, how strange the mistakes of the great mass of mankind, who regard it merely as an impulse, an act of excited feeling, into which reason hardly enters, and with which judgment has little to do. I was led to examine farther, and inquire into the teachings of the Bible in this matter. The more I examined and reflected, the more forcibly did the truth and appositeness of the remark strike my mind. Thus the language of the great Teacher, with other passages of a similar character, enforces this truth. "Count the cost." This implies calculation. "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve," &c. This implies calculation, a calm, deliberate weighing of the claims of God, compared with every other object, upon our love and obedience; a calculation which leads to a result so certain, that none can deny its truth. Then came those great questions in moral arithmetic, stated in such terms as imply calculation. "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" I sat down to work out those questions in my mind. I placed on one side the world; I added up its honors, its pleasures, its wealth, into one sum; I read the answer, as given by one who had possessed the whole, "All is vanity

and vexation of spirit." Then I added, over against it, the capacities and duration of the soul, but I could not even approximate to a result. Long after the added treasures of the world had dwindled to a fraction too small for computation, the value of the soul went on increasing, till I could pursue the calculation no further, and felt that no words, nor numbers, nor thought, could work out the mighty sum. This, then, is the calculation God urges upon us; a sum to be worked out, in which immortal souls and eternal interests come into the computation.

Following out the same thought, I was led to look at the character of the motives pressed upon us. A like general principle of sober calculation runs through them all. Immediate repentance is urged from the uncertainty of life and the certainty of approaching death and judgment. And who that seriously considers these facts can be insensible to the call, or hazard to a future time the great business of life? The penalties of sin are presented, to warn against trangression. Who that calculates the question, "Who hath hardened himself against him and prospered?" can hesitate as to the result, or not perceive the foolhardiness of impenitence? The joys and crowns of heaven are placed against the trials and crosses of discipleship; and the apostle having set the one against the other, reckoned the "sufferings of this present time not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." Of these terrors, indeed, we may form no adequate conception, nor do we reach the full estimate of these joys, for the wrath of God, when poured out without mixture, cannot be measured; all eternity will not drain that cup; and "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

But yet we may reach a result, which shows the depths of wo, and the heights of joy, so far as to make every considerate mind feel the value of the one, and the gloom of the other.

Should we run through the whole round of motives, there is a like appeal to thought and reflection. And oftentimes the truth assumes the language of a question in arithmetical calculation. Thus the question, inquiring into our obligations to God, "How much owest thou unto my Lord?" demands calculation. Mercies of providence and grace, repeated every moment, added into one sum, alone can give the answer. So, also, the solemn admonition, "Give an account of thy stewardship," involves an estimate of life, in all its varied scenes of probation. And the more affecting appeal drawn from the love of him who died for us, carries the mind to the settling of the question, whether he, to whom we owe our life, may not rightfully demand that that life be wholly consecrated to him. Even the duty of forgiveness involves a like calculation, since it leads us to weigh the trespasses of others against us with our trespasses against God, and to institute the inquiry, whether he to whom his master has freely forgiven ten thousand talents, may dare to prosecute his fellow-servant to the death for a few pence. Nor does the apostle develop another principle, when, to encourage our faith, he asks, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" For what is this but a calculation based on God's abounding love to sinners, and leading to the blessed result, "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." Thus in all the motives of the gospel, the one is set over against the other, blessing against cursing, life against death, and the result is arrived at on principles of calculation, as unerring in the conclusions to which they lead as the laws of truth and the testimony of God.

E. F. C.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

"TRY AGAIN."

If the sower of seed has failed of an harvest,—if, in spite of all his efforts, he is obliged to gaze upon a still thankless soil, there is, in the midst of despondency, one animating thought,—he can *try again*. It will not be long ere there shall be sunny skies and genial showers, and seed time shall invite his labor and bid him hope once more.

We, as friends of our race, are seeking a nobler harvest than ever waved beneath an autumnal sun. We seek to gather youthful minds into the family of God and sow in them the seeds of everlasting happiness; an harvest they shall reap and we rejoice over with them in the heavenly kingdom of God. But, perhaps, we have stood mourning by to witness little or no return of all our care and toil. We have sowed, but have seen no harvest. We went out weeping and bearing precious seed, but we did not return bringing our sheaves with us. We may have seen the deathless minds we had sought to imbue with the life and power of holiness, pass on, year after year, unmoved by all our appeals, unimpressed, unreformed, unforgiven! They have, perhaps, many of them, gone on their way toward eternity, so far as we can judge, not the better for our labors. They may have gone beyond our reach. They were children when we began our efforts for their good, but the years have rapidly gone, and, passing one boundary after another of life, they have arrived at a period when our influence over them has ceased and our connection with them has ended.

We may mourn, as well we may, if, in our review of our connection with that mass of mind, we were unwise, or unskilful, or negligent, or slothful. If we forbore the love and zeal that might have turned their feet into the way of life, we have wherewithal to lament before God, and let us not spare ourselves.

But as the disappointed husbandman can say, as the

spring opens, "I will try again," so can we. Has a generation passed, whom we sought in vain to bring into the fold of God? But, lo! here is a new generation, fresh to our hands. Here comes yet another mighty multitude of youthful spirits, opening their young bosoms to our impulses, and ready, like the warm wax, to receive impressions. Has a generation swept by us, unprofited by our labors? But here is another; and all the tenderness of the youthful mind, and all the susceptibility of the youthful heart, invite us to renew the sublime experiment of seeking to make them savingly acquainted with the living God. The generation now verging upon adult life, may have resisted us and have been hardened, but here is soft, tender, plastic minds again. And the voice that called this new generation into being and placed them under our power, is the voice that lifts its loud appeal, "TRY AGAIN!"

Have we failed aforetime, and are we pensive and sad over the momentous interests involved in that failure? But he who gave us the high privilege of seeking to make divine impressions upon the then passing generation, so far from making that failure the end of trusting us, has, in fact, renewed the trust, and swarming around us are the multitudes, in reference to the tenderness of whose hearts, there comes the renewed appeal, "TRY AGAIN!"

Men try again in every case of the failure of important worldly enterprise. The baffled mariner puts to sea again. The disappointed sower of the seed casts it in again. Commercial enterprise, thwarted in one quarter, hastens to another. The watch-word, "try again," rings in the ears and rouses the hearts of all whom any thing can rouse. The great machinery of human industry, in all its complications, feels the impulse, and worldly enterprises march on to their triumphs.

Into whose ears should that same appeal more loudly and with greater solemnity come, than to the ears of those, into

whose hands is committed the unutterably momentous work of training youthful minds for God and heaven? especially since a field so vast, so fair, so inviting, is thrown open to us. Here are fresh comers upon the theatre of life. Here are minds not hardened and repulsive of the truth. These new comers have not yet been brought into such contact with the vices of a guilty world, as to have stupified conscience and paralyzed moral sensibility. Others have done this who have gone before them. But those have not done it. They belong indeed to a fallen and sinful race, and have not escaped the taint that has defiled human nature. Yet sin in them is not like the gnarled and stubborn oak. Conscience is not seared. Vice has not steeled their hearts against the impulses of truth. Here is a fair and noble field. H. B. H.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

A WORD TO TEACHERS.

NOTHING is so important to a teacher's success, as to find the avenue to the confidence and love of his class. There is a key that will unlock this door, and there is only one. A teacher who has a *warm heart* will invariably find it. He must not only love his class, but he must convince them of his love. To do so he must have much of the spirit of his Master. His soul must be warmed by the fire of the Holy Ghost. He must go from his Bethel to his class; and when he speaks, it should be evident to them that he has "been with Jesus." They should be able to see that his heart throbs with love to the Saviour, and that he has met them because he is yearning with a desire to do them good. O how worthless are the labors of a cold-hearted teacher! He will freeze up the young hearts around him, though glowing with all the ardor of childhood. Sabbath school teacher! get thee a warm heart. Thou wilt else be little better than a sinecure in God's nursery.—[*N. Y.*] *S. S. Monitor.*

ON FAMILY GOVERNMENT.---NO. III.

THE BENEFIT OF PARENTAL GOVERNMENT.

In our last, while speaking of the end of parental government, we incidentally glanced at some of the benefits to the parent, in the respect and love they receive from their children; in securing the favor of God, as in the case of Abraham, who was blessed because he commanded his children after him;—in avoiding the curse of God, which curse Eli and his family felt. But upon the child in an eminent degree the benefit is conferred; a benefit lasting as life, and running over to the eternal world. "A child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame;" and he whose conduct brings shame to her on whose bosom his infant head was cradled, brings ruin to his own soul. He who blights the hopes of his parents, who brings down their hairs with sorrow to the grave, blasts his own earthly prospects, and unless repentance comes to his relief, he can never see God in peace. Eli's sons were men of Belial. He knew it. He gave them good advice. He mingled with his advice a little moral suasion, and said, "Why do ye these things?" But "he restrained them not." His misplaced humanity was their ruin; and in it they involved their father and all his house, cutting them off for ever from the favor of God. Many a daughter, fallen in misery and stained with crime, has been heard to curse with her dying breath, the fatal indulgence of a mother. Many a son, as he has paced his narrow cell at midnight, has exclaimed, "Had my father restrained me, and spared not for my crying, I should not have been here."

A child cannot be happy whose passion is not checked and whose will is not subdued. He must be miserable. To disobey is to be wretched. A reckless child forms habits at war with his own good; habits which will infuse themselves into all portions of its existence; which will attend a person

while he lives. "He that ruleth his spirit is better than he that taketh a city." Such a conquest must be commenced in youth; its principles fixed in early life. It can only be begun, by a righteous and exact parental discipline.

The comforts of home, and the happiness which children infuse around the domestic altar, are not known where children are rebellious. One disobedient and wilful child can drive from the dwelling all domestic peace. Neither night nor day will bring repose to him who has a rebellious child. The storm without can better be endured, than that shelter in which the government is in the hands of a passionate child, who bears rule in its rudeness. We have known the table disturbed, by the peevishness of children, conversations interrupted by their impertinence, the worship of God in the family disturbed; and after all had been made as miserable as was necessary, then, amid tears, strong crying and resistance, the child would be taken out. And the next day the conflict begins and ends as before. No principle gained; no rule effected, and the conflict, mortification and misery endured, when a day might end it. If a child cannot be controlled, no one but its parent ought to be annoyed. I know parents think that their children should early be made familiar with the services of worship. True, and with the manner in which they ought to conduct. And little good will be done till they can learn to be quiet in those exercises. There is little piety in reading before children, or to them, the word of God, while we allow them to transgress its plainest commands. "I am afraid you dislike to hear children cry," said an indulgent mother to her guest, as her child was shrieking with all its might in temper. "It does not disturb me at all," was the guest's reply, "for in all well regulated families they are immediately taken out of the room." M. H. S.

To men, as to books, there are before and behind two empty covers,—childhood and old age.

THE SABBATH SCHOOL.

BY MRS. GILBERT.

Like a lone husbandman forlorn,
The man of Gloucester* went,
Bearing this seed of precious corn,
And God the blessing sent.

Now, watered long by faith and prayer,
From year to year it grows,
Till heath, and hill, and desert bare,
Have blossomed like the rose.

And thus, in cheerful ranks arrayed,
Our tens of thousands meet;
Lord of the harvest, bless the blade,
And keep from tares the wheat.

Send gently down thy mercy's showers,
And still in favor shine;
So shall safe harvest-home be ours,
And endless glory thine.

WOMAN'S INDEBTEDNESS TO THE BIBLE.

Good morning, Susan, I came to invite you to join our class in the Sabbath school this winter.

Susan. Thank you, I suppose it is the same old story, the study of the Bible?

Maria. Yes, the study of the word of God; we, who owe so much to the Bible, cannot, for a moment, doubt the duty and importance of the study.

S. O, I think the Sabbath school an excellent institution for children; but I do not know as it is worth while for me to attend it. I do not feel that I *owe* so much to the Bible as to be under any particular *obligation* to study it.

M. My dear Susan, do you know why you have at this moment a mind untrammelled by superstition, untortured by

* Robert Raikes.

a thousand nameless fears of an uncertain hereafter? Why are you not offering various propitiatory sacrifices to mitigate or avert the wrath of imaginary demons; or to conciliate the favor of gods, who are the essence of every thing vile and abominable? Have you ever considered what has made New England, with its cold, inhospitable climate, bleak winds and sterile soil, one of earth's choicest dwelling places? What has scattered churches and school-houses through all her towns and villages, and made her sons and daughters of every class and condition in life, intelligent, virtuous and respectable? Above all, what has exalted *woman* to the rank assigned her by her Creator, when he first gave her to be a companion of man? O Susan, ill does it become woman to neglect or speak lightly of the Bible. To the general diffusion of its principles, to the influence of its benign and holy spirit, do we owe our very existence as moral and intellectual beings. Where, in all the world, is woman the esteemed and valued friend, the *respected* and cherished wife, the *honored* and beloved mother? Where is her understanding cultivated, her capacities for intellectual improvement appreciated, and the longings of her soul after knowledge, in any measure satisfied? In those countries, and in those only, where the Bible is read, and where its pure, ennobling, sanctifying principles are, in some good degree, prevalent. Will you, my friend, examine your Bible and tell me, when we meet again, what would be the condition of this world, if the Bible were *universally studied and obeyed*; if it were to all men the guide to duty and the rule of action; and I will read you a letter from heathen lands, showing something of the condition of a people without the Bible, and without the God which the Bible reveals to us.

F.

"The upright, if he suffer calumny to move him, fears the tongue of man more than the eye of God."

SABBATH SCHOOLS.

"I saw no class in Scotland, whose conditions seemed to have so much improved, since I left the country, forty years ago, says Grant Thorburn in his Journal, as that of the fisher-women. I was told that it was mainly owing to the introduction among them of Sabbath schools. It is rather remarkable that those vain philosophers, who have been writing for centuries and searching for plans whereby to improve the condition of man, thought not of this. The experiment never yet has failed (where there lived a community who obeyed not God nor feared man; but who lived in filth, rags, and drunkenness), but as soon as you introduce among them the order of the Sabbath, the sober decencies of religion, they are temperate, clean, clothed, and sitting in their right mind, hearing his word."

READING FOR THE YOUNG.

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 41.]

We have, in a former article, spoken of the Bible as the truest, the best, the most necessary of all books, for the young. The young man who takes heed to his way according to this divine word, will be saved from the most ruinous ignorance, and made wise unto salvation, though he should never read another book.

But we cannot, nor would we, confine the young to the reading of the Bible. Our children, unlike the young Timothy, are provided with innumerable publications, which solicit attention, and promise to repay the labor of reading with increase of wisdom. This is pre-eminently the age of cheap literature; and the youthful part of our readers need some general hint as to what they should *not*, though we may not be able to tell them exactly what they *ought* to read.

There is a strong tendency in most youthful minds to indulge in what is called, and truly enough, *light reading*,—stories, romances, novels,—which is intended to amuse, without exciting or requiring any mental effort; and at the present day, the flood of this sort of books is so great, that none are so poor, or so remote from the places of publication, as to be unable to gratify this desire.

We hope none of our readers will think that we are narrow in our views of life, or bigoted in our feelings, or wanting in regard for the happiness of the young, when we say that all such books may safely be regarded as trash, if they are not something infinitely worse; and that it is the solemn duty of all persons, old and young, to avoid them as always useless, and generally injurious. We give, in relation to this subject, the same advice, and for the same reason, that we give with regard to intoxicating liquors,—abstain from them, for they can, at best, do you no good,—they are capable of doing you an infinite injury, and they will, probably, if freely used, destroy the soul.

But our young friends may ask how this course of light reading can be so pernicious, and what there is in these books to fear? We answer, and we have in mind many affecting illustrations of the truth of our declaration, that the reading of such books tends to weaken and derange the intellectual powers; to injure the judgment, the memory, the imagination, the will and the heart; to render the young and excitable mind incapable of discovering and relishing truth. It destroys the taste for serious pursuits, and for the simple and innocent pleasures which God has provided for his intelligent offspring. It excites the nervous system, produces dissatisfaction with necessary labor, renders the temper unsteady, fretful, peevish and perverse, and gradually unfits the whole mind for the scenes which we are called to act. It blunts the sensibility of the heart, so that while the reader may weep or rejoice in view of what he knows to be fiction, he may be unfeeling

and unpitying towards the real and clamorous suffering around him. It makes the reader discontented with what seems to him his narrow sphere of action, and unmindful of his duties, his dangers, his destiny,—of the realities and claims of the world in which he is placed as a laborer with God. And surely the young are naturally prone enough to complain of the lot to which they are bound, by a providential necessity, and have time enough for castle-building, however busy they keep themselves, without making the world still sterner, and duty more distasteful, by the mental intoxication and discontent which novel-reading is calculated to produce. We may possibly resume this subject at some future time, and give a sketch of a library for young persons.

"THE NURSERY OF THE CHURCH."

The institution of Sabbath schools is often denominated "the nursery of the church." The correctness of this expression is illustrated by the following item:

During the last thirteen years, there have been added to a small church in Maine, between sixty and seventy persons. Of these, *all but one* were from the Sabbath school or Bible-class! And that one was a person over eighty years of age; and she was accustomed every week to sit down with a grand-daughter and study the Sabbath school lesson.

Although the Sabbath school and Bible-class may not have been the only instruments in the conversion of these individuals, yet they doubtless exerted a happy influence in preparing their minds more readily to receive the instructions of the pulpit, and to be benefited by all the means employed for their salvation. This thought should encourage superin-

tendents and teachers; they are co-workers with the ministers of the everlasting gospel, and even "laborers together with God."

NO CONVERSIONS!

It is deeply painful to learn,—as we do from the Annual Report of the Barnstable Co. S. S. Society, just received,—that no reference is made, in any of the returns from the schools, to *conversions*. Not a case is reported as having occurred the past year! This has not before been true, in that county, for any year during the past ten. We fear that the reports on this subject from most, if not all, of the auxiliaries of the Society, will be of the same painful character. When will the Lord turn again our captivity?

SECRET OF SUCCESS.

In visiting a Sabbath school recently, our attention was early directed to a class of eleven or twelve young ladies. No one could cast an eye over the school without noticing that class. All the members appeared absorbed and deeply interested in the exercise in which they were engaged. On inquiry, we learned that this was their usual appearance; and that some of the members exhibit no small concern in reference to the subject of their personal salvation.

A single incident in regard to the teacher, will reveal the secret of his success, in securing this interested attention of his class. He is accustomed to *rise at four o'clock Sabbath morning*,—an hour earlier than other mornings,—*that he may have time to prepare his lesson and to commend his class to God in prayer!* With God's blessing, might we not expect in all cases, under similar circumstances, like results? Every teacher, by personal experiment, may obtain a satisfactory answer to this question.

THE

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THE SABBATH SCHOOL CONCERT.

A SUPERINTENDENT'S ADDRESS TO HIS SABBATH SCHOOL.

My Dear Young Friends,

You know it is common, at particular seasons of the year, for persons engaged in business to look over their accounts, and see how they stand. Now this is wise and useful, even though it concerns only the things of the world. But there is another account to settle vastly more important, and which all of us are very apt to neglect,—I mean our account with God. This account has been running on for a number of years, and the charges against us are very many and very great. Perhaps this is one reason why we put off a settlement. We are afraid to meet it. But is this wise? Does it lessen our danger by shutting our eyes as it comes nearer and nearer? Is it not rather the part of wisdom to keep awake to our danger, and be like a sentinel at his post, always on the look out, and prepared for the first approach of an enemy?

Did you ever hear of Mr. *Dickinson*, a good minister of *Waterford*, in *England*? His death was a very striking illus-

tration of the passage, "Watch, therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh." He had just commenced preaching his sermon one Sabbath day, and taken for his text, the words, "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ,"—when, after speaking a few sentences, he fell back in the pulpit, and instantly expired! He was a good man, and kept his accounts with GOD settled every day, so that when his Master called him to the reckoning, he was ready, and heard the joyful sound, "*Come up hither.*"

My young friends, allow me to ask; How IS YOUR ACCOUNT WITH GOD? Have I not reason to fear, that, with regard to *some* of you, nothing has been done to see how things stand with your Maker. With *many*, perhaps, the examination has been very imperfect—very superficial. Now, fearing this, as a faithful watchman, I come to you in the way of warning, and affectionate admonition. I should be unworthy of the post which your friends have assigned me, if I saw you in any danger, and did not give you timely notice. And neither your teachers nor myself, can ever hope to succeed in arousing you to a sense of your danger, unless we bring home to you—*each one of you*—your personal guilt—unless we proclaim to you your certain ruin, if you do not, while you may, secure the friendship and favor of God.

Can you, my young friends, expect happiness, if you are disturbed in your own bosoms, and have GOD for your enemy? It cannot be. I will then ask you to look into the books of *memory* and *conscience*, and faithfully make out an account of sins and follies on the one side, and mercies and forbearance on the other, and see whether you can fairly expect the future to be to you happier than the past, if your THOUGHTS, your WORDS, and your ACTIONS, *are not of a purer and more heavenly character, than they have ever yet been?*

It will be always a matter of fact, that "a tree shall be known by its fruits." If you hear a youth using profane lan-

guage, lightly speaking that name which angels pronounce with reverence, can you believe, for a moment, *that* youth loves GOD?

If you see another trifling and wasting the hours of GOD's holy day, neglecting the *Bible*, the *Sabbath school*, and the *house of prayer*, can you believe, for a moment, *that* youth loves GOD?

And so, in other particulars, you can easily judge, by comparing things together, where the truth lies; and if you can do this about your neighbor, you certainly can do it in your own case—and even better;—for here you have the advantage of looking into your very heart, and discovering all the motives which influence you—and which, in the case of your neighbor, are almost entirely concealed.

The present is the most interesting and important period with each of you. "Opportunity" has been called "the flower of time." What a golden 'opportunity' is youth! And what precious fruit may be expected when the blossom of love is fanned and watered by the Spirit of GOD!

Cultivate, then, my dear young friends, LOVE TO GOD, as your first and grand duty. Let no day pass without thanking this great and good BEING, for creating and preserving you; for giving you so many earthly comforts; and especially for giving his well-beloved SON to die for your sins, and open a way, in which he can consistently pardon and bless you, *if you repent and abandon your sins, and believe in* CHRIST.

Let no day pass without reading some portion of that Book of books, the HOLY BIBLE, which contains all that it is important for you to know, in order to be useful and happy while you live—quiet, resigned, and happy when you die—and unspeakably and for ever happy in the world of glory.

If you thus love GOD and his word, you will be dutiful and affectionate children—kind and obliging brothers and sisters—attentive and industrious scholars—faithful friends—and finally, useful members of society, and ornaments of the

church, when your parents' dust may be slumbering in the ground.

It is a source of the highest pleasure to me, when I remember that I address some scholars, who have found religion's "ways to be ways of pleasantness," and are making steady advances in the path to heaven. To such I have only to say, "Be not weary in well doing." Still trust in the same Saviour, whom you have professed to love; keep the world under your feet, and heaven constantly in view. Live to be more and more useful. Let the world be the better for your having lived in it. Proclaim the gospel to all around you, by leading holy lives, and being fruitful in every good word and work. The Master you serve is faithful to all his promises—and when you have finished your appointed term on earth, he will receive you to the inheritance above, and put you in possession of an unfading crown, the purchase and reward of a Saviour's merits.

And, in conclusion, WHY MAY NOT THIS BRIGHT CROWN ENCIRCLE THE HEAD OF EVERY MEMBER OF THIS SCHOOL?

It is the sincere desire of God, that every human being should be happy. If any of you are otherwise, you can never charge God with want of love towards you. He has done all that infinite kindness can do, consistent with his character, to save you from ruin, and fit you for immortal glory. O do not, my young friends, cast away so precious a pearl as your never-dying soul. Think, O think, where it is to be thousands and millions of years hence; and remember that you now have the power in your own hands, of placing a seal on your character, which will show that you are the friend of God, and fitted for the happiness he has prepared through eternity, for all who love him.

A Superintendent.

THE OLD LADIES' CLASS.

Oh, yes! I seem to see it now—that class of old ladies, as one by one, with feeble step and bowed form, they entered the parsonage pew, in that old meeting-house. The wife of the venerable pastor, who for nearly forty years had broken to them the bread of life, sat at its head.

How her soul seemed imbued with the spirit of the Holy Book over which she was bending. Next to her sat old Mrs. C——, who, with the aid of her little tin trumpet, endeavored to catch each syllable uttered by the low, sweet voice of the teacher.

Then there was good old grandma'am L——, over whose head had passed the snows of fourscore winters. She was beloved by all who knew her. She was every body's grandma'am, and was known by no other name.

Mrs. B—, Mrs. D—, and Mrs. M—, made up the class. They had all arrived at that age when "the strong bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened."

Almost all their lives they had "known the Holy Scriptures which were making them wise unto salvation." Yet they deemed it not enough, but would descend into the grave with the word of God in their hearts, and on their tongues.

The old meeting-house is gone now,—and that parsonage pew, around which so many tender recollections cluster, has been demolished, and that class, most of them, are numbered with the dead. But their example still lives.

The Sabbath school was held during the intermission, and as the intermission was never more than an hour and a half, those who lived at a distance, must forego their dinner, or the Sabbath school. Some had thought they could not give up their hot dinner on the Sabbath. Others needed their cup of tea to keep them awake during the exercises of the afternoon. But who needed a cup of tea, or a warm din-

ner, more than those aged mothers in Israel? If they could deny themselves for the sake of their Sabbath school, who could not? Thus "young men and maidens, old men and children," were induced to number themselves with those Sabbath scholars, and class after class was formed, of adults as well as children, who desired to be fed with the bread of life.

It is but a little while since good "grandma'am L." was laid in the grave. Arrived at the great age of more than ninety, she still exemplified in her life, the fruits of the gospel of Christ. All was peace and love. Her life had been one of consistent, humble, active piety. She had ever considered it more blessed to give than to receive; and though prompt to meet the calls of each of the many benevolent objects of the day, none met with a more welcome reception than the claims of the Sabbath school.

It was on one of her last visits to that time-worn sanctuary, that an agent portrayed the moral destitution of the *West*, and the importance of planting Sabbath schools there. The pastor proposed that a collection be taken up on the spot, to aid in establishing them; and that any who were not prepared to give then, might send in their money, to the house of the pastor, before the agent should leave, on the following morning. The good old lady had paid the closest attention to the narrative, and as the hat was about being passed to receive the contribution, she tottered along with her cane, to the parsonage pew, and whispered in her own simple, affectionate way, in the ear of Mrs. F., "*Do, dear honey, give that man a dollar for me, and I'll pay you again.*"

As she lay upon the bed of death, and her friends were about sending for her pastor, whose visits, she said, had given her such foretastes of heaven, in many an hour of anguish—"Don't send for him," she begged; "you know how I love the good man, but I'm afraid he will pray that I may get well again, and I want to go. I try to be patient, and wait the Lord's time, but I have waited so LONG."

Precious Christian! She had lived through many changes, and many trials; but the grace of God had always been sufficient for her. She had lived to see her *great grand children* take their places in the Sabbath school she loved. The aged partner of her life had but a little preceded her, to welcome her to the abodes of the blest, and like Simeon of old, she seemed to be saying, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." Her wish was granted. Her pastor saw her; but he prayed that God would smooth her pathway to the tomb, and grant her an abundant entrance into that rest reserved for his people, a joyful union with Christ and departed friends, and that her mantle might fall upon those she left on earth. She died,

"So fades a summer cloud away—
So sinks the gale when storms are o'er—
So gently shuts the eye of day—
So dies a wave along the shore.

Triumphant smiles the victor's brow,
Fanned by some guardian angel's wing:
Oh grave! where is thy victory now?
And where, oh death, where is thy sting!"

So gently did her soul leave the worn out tenement of clay it had so long inhabited.

That congregation now worships in a more modern house, and the present parsonage pew is still occupied by a Sabbath school class. The same teacher, too, is there. One after another of her former class have dropped into the grave, but others take their places. Instead of the mothers, are the daughters, and still it is a class of hoary heads. The same low, sweet voice, though a little more feeble, rehearses to them the precious promises of Christ, and as they gather about her, and repeat the words as they are uttered, one and another is heard exclaiming, "Oh what a promise!" "What sweet promises!" They seemed to be learning still more and treas-

uring up what they long ago began to learn, of "the breadth, and length, the depth, and height of the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that they might be filled with all the fullness of God." SELINA.

A SHORT SERMON TO FAITHFUL TEACHERS.

BY REV. B. STOW.

Let us not be weary in well-doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.—Gal. 6: 9.

Cicero, the greatest of Roman orators, has said that the introduction to a discourse should always be so framed as to conciliate the good will of the hearers. Perhaps I shall best conciliate yours by omitting all introduction, and coming, as you do, when surrounded by your classes, directly to the main subject.

I. *You are engaged in well-doing.*

The service which you render, includes the three elements that are essential to every *good work*:—

1. A good *end*—the glory of God;
2. A good *rule*—the word of God;
3. A good *motive*—the love of God.

You are doing well for *yourselves;* for you are advancing your own acquaintance with divine truth, and accumulating stores of precious knowledge which gold cannot buy. From this treasure you may lavishly impart, and yet never reduce the quantity. You may give away the whole, and yet retain the whole. You are doing well for *children*, for you are coöperating with other agencies in training them for usefulness and respectability in this life, and happiness and glory in the world to come. You are doing well for *parents*, by aiding those who are faithful, and by doing what the unfaithful neglect, in the religious education of their offspring. You are doing well for the *community*, whose best interests are promo-

ted by your labors. You are doing well for the *church*, whose ministry and membership are to be enriched by the products of your fidelity. You are doing well for your *Master*, whose crown is to be set with many a jewel, polished under your own hand.

II. *In this work you are liable to become weary and faint.*

It is preëminently a work of faith. You see not immediately—perhaps never, in the present life, the results of your labors. You are sowing seed which may be destined to "lie buried long in dust," and of which the fruit shall be garnered by the next generation of laborers. To persevere in duty, upon such conditions, is not always an easy service. Unless your faith be strong, you will become weary in well-doing.

Many discouragements attend your work. Your pupils are often listless, and indifferent, and even refractory. They sometimes manifest a maturity of depravedness quite in advance of their years. Parents frequently treat your tender solicitude and self-denying efforts for the good of their children with cold ingratitude. Churches and their pastors do not always exhibit an interest in the affairs of the Sabbath school commensurate with their importance. You are left to toil alone, unsustained by the sympathies and prayers of your Christian brethren. Under such circumstances, you are liable to become weary and disheartened.

III. *You have strong encouragements to persevere.*

Assurances from the great Promiser, of the most satisfactory kind, are found jewelling almost every page of his inspired Word. The text itself contains two.

You shall reap. If you become not weary in well-doing; if you faint not, but prosecute your work with fidelity, you shall, sooner or later, gather a harvest from the seed sown. The word of the Faithful One who is to be your final Judge, is pledged that you shall in no wise lose your reward. Having sown to the Spirit, you shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. Having sown in tears, you shall reap in joy. Having

persevered in well-doing, the Saviour will say to you, "Well-done, thou good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

All this shall be *in due season.* As in the natural, so in the spiritual world, God has arranged the periods of seed-time and of harvest. The one is the antecedent, the other is the consequent. Between the two there may be a wide interval; but they are connected by indissoluble relations. Bread cast upon the waters shall be found, though after many days. God's time, both for labor, and for rewarding labor, is always the best. Though the promised blessing may be delayed, yet the postponement is always for good reasons. Every thing will be in due season. Be patient, then, and while you do good, trust in the Lord.

Fulfil the specified conditions of appointed moral ends, and you may confidently anticipate the final accomplishment of those ends.—S. S. Treasury.

RELIGION A MATTER OF CALCULATION.

[CONCLUDED FROM PAGE 61.]

In further pursuing this matter of calculation, I was led to look at the conduct of the righteous and the wicked. There was Abraham, leaving country and kindred, looking for a city with foundations. He evidently judged the blessing sought, richer than the good forsaken; and hence forsook the less for the greater. There was Moses, "choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompense of reward." Thus was the calculation of a wise man, not deceived by present appearances, but carefully weighing the whole matter, and securing the greatest good. Look also at Paul—counting himself nothing, his afflictions nothing, life itself as of no value, if he might

win Christ. In all these cases there was a recompense sought, a calm and sober choice, a preference of the heavenly riches above the earthly mammon, and a readiness to pay the price, in the tribulations of a life of faith. One fact here deserves notice. They never repented their choice. Their living and dying testimony speaks their deep conviction of the value of the treasure secured, and the worthlessness of all they had forsaken to secure it. On the other hand, the careless sinner, who refuses thus soberly to calculate his destiny, has in thousands of instances, left his record of the folly of his choice, in preferring the baubles of earth to the crowns of heaven. Surely, thought I, as I ran over the subject, this question is settled. By the combined witness of God and man, is the result gained, that it is the part of true wisdom to seek first the kingdom of God.

While I thus reasoned with myself, the subject spread out before my mind, till I was lost in the contemplation. Nor can I present it to the minds of my readers, further than to suggest some of the questions of calculation the Bible proposes. I would you might take these home to your hearts and work them out. Let the mind compute the numbers, let reason weigh the evidence, let conscience determine the result, and what answer would you arrive at in questions like these; "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?"—"Can thine heart endure, or can thy hands be strong, in the day that I shall deal with thee?"—"How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" In all these, and other questions of God, what a call for thought and judgment. Or art thou delaying repentance? Go and calculate the value of the present hour. Let me present the great thought once more in the most general terms, for I would have you see how religion is eminently a matter of calculation. What then is the question God proposes? It is one of loss and gain. Lose the world and gain thy soul—or lose thy soul and gain

the world. Bear the cross to win the crown—or lose the crown by shunning the cross. Reject Christ to pursue sin and gather its wages of death, or forsake sin and cleave to Christ, to enjoy the wages of everlasting life. Into these great questions, value, cost, and duration, the three elements of calculation, enter. Heaven is weighed against earth and hell for value—a life of holiness with all its trials against the unsatisfying pleasures of a life of sin for cost; and the moment of time against the boundless range of eternity for duration. And God calls on man to task his mind to consider the question, and determine the result. This is religion. A matter of deep thought, calm, sober reflection, in considering which the immortal mind will fill up eternity.

Remember, then, that religion invites, nay demands consideration. Unless I have succeeded in carrying this conviction to the minds of my readers, I have done nothing. Calm, sober reflection on these points, to which I have alluded, would make you tremble, if nothing more. For what is your life? a vapor—even now vanishing away. What is dependent on that life? An eternity of happiness or wo. And yet how carelessly you let the vapor vanish, without thought, without prayer, without penitence, and pay no heed to the soul, committed to thy trust. Call you this prudence? this calculation? No, my fellow sinner, this is folly; this is reckless inconsideration. Thus saith the Lord, Consider your ways. I speak as to wise men, judge ye what I say—Sit down and calmly count the cost; put the mind on the calculation of the question proposed by the great teacher—"What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" E. F. C.

"Let the warmth of your hearts, Sabbath school teachers, and the sunshine of your countenances fall on the young blossoms about you, that the fruits of your labors of love may be abundant, and that you may not lose this recompense of reward."

"TRY AGAIN."

CONCLUDED FROM PAGE 64.

And then, the *nobleness of our work*, how loud its appeal to "try again." Mere cultivation of the intellect and the accomplishments of good breeding and good manners, have reference only to this transitory life; while we seek that cultivation of the heart which leads to happy alliance with God, and harmony with all his holy will, which gives human minds similitude to angelic, and fits them for the society of the purest, and happiest, and most exalted beings in the universe. We do seek accomplishments for our beloved young friends, but they are not the tinsel and the trappings that allure the eye of the external observer. We seek for the accomplishments that shall beautify their moral natures, and shall cause the eyes of God and all holy beings to contemplate them with pleasure. We seek that inward adorning of the heart, which, while it shall minister to all substantial beauty of external character, shall confer imperishable moral loveliness, and become a passport to the regions of external light and love. For grandeur of purpose and end, therefore, our design leaves in the dust all others. Could we make every child a temporal monarch, and lay kingdoms at his feet, it would be contemptible compared with making him a king and a priest unto God, that he may offer him incense in the eternal temple! The nobleness of our enterprise, as it lifts itself up in its moral grandeur, sends to us the animating appeal, "TRY AGAIN!"

The *kind aid proffered us from the most responsible quarter* unites in the same appeal. Who ever undertook to lead a youthful spirit to love and honor its Maker, that did not, by that act, put itself into a position of acceptance with him? Did God ever look on coldly and indifferently while a pastor, a parent, a Sabbath school teacher, faithfully sought to win for its Maker the warm affections of a young mind?

Can we separate from God the idea of his concurrence and aid in such a work? Do we not feel that we throw ourselves into the current of his own infinite purposes, and into the same direction with the mighty stream of the emotions and desires of his infinite mind? Do not we and he agree, and is not our path the same, when we seek to recover the lost, and cause holiness to become the glory and beauty of the young around us? Has he an attribute that is not on our side in such a work? And should not such a fact exhilarate our hearts, and stimulate the noble purpose to "TRY AGAIN!"

Yet another voice re-echoes that appeal. It is that of *past success.* Our enterprise a *failure!* What blessed testimony in heaven and on earth that it has been a *triumph!* Were all that our enterprise, under God, has sent home to glory, to send us their voices, whose heart would not melt at the music of so great a choir! And the response to it, of souls on earth led to Christ by Sabbath school influences, how loud and how sweet! And, beside actual conversion, how much influence has there been for good in the softening, subduing, humanizing, restraining effect of the truth, impressed on millions of youthful minds! What evils from out-bursting guilt have thus been averted from the fireside, the neighborhood, the nation! All the gracious influences which religious instruction of the young has thrown over them, unite in re-echoing the cry already heard from so many quarters, "TRY AGAIN!"

Yet one more voice is heard and is found in the fact, that if *we yield and refuse to try again, we submit to the certain triumph of our great rival and spiritual enemy.* To that fair field, the youthful mind of a new generation, Satan will hasten with all his artifice and power. There shall not remain one of them uncorrupted, if zeal and energy on his part can effect it. He will become the roaring lion or the angel of light, as shall best aid him in securing his fiendish purposes.

How many, how powerful, and how skilfully directed, the agencies he now has in operation for poisoning the tender plant at its earliest budding, so that the tree shall be hateful for its deformity, and yield only pestilence and death! Every spot neglected will be instantly occupied by the great antagonist of human holiness and happiness. If we do not try again, he will. Our retreat will be his triumph. Every youthful spirit we abandon, he will mould into his own likeness, inflame with his own destructive passions, make an agent in the wider sphere of pollution and ruin, and reward the servitude with everlasting shame and suffering. Are we willing to yield the ground, with the certainty before us of so terrible an issue? Then we must "TRY AGAIN!"

THE TEACHER'S RELATION TO HIS COUNTRY.

THE Sabbath school teacher sustains a very important relation to his *country* at large. Whereas the spirit of insubordination, contempt of law and authority, disregard for all the bonds and benefits of society, is the ripening curse of the land,—you are doing what in you lies to stem the torrent, and to stay the plague. If the habits of order and subordination which your children learn at school, make them dutiful to parents and comforts at home, they do, for this very reason, tend to make them obedient to governments, and blessings to society. If infidelity tends to brutalize, by destroying all respect, and courtesy, and mutual deference, the Christianity which you aid to teach, has this secondary, but most beneficial result—it tends to civilize. Fearlessly may we appeal to experience, and ask, are the seditious or the disaffected, the revolutionist or the traitor, to be found in the ranks of those who *retain* the lessons which they have been taught in our schools; or, rather, amongst those who, if they ever came under such

influence, "have forgotten the guides of their youth, and forsaken the covenant of their God!"

Yes, dear friends, I conscientiously believe that yours is not only a most charitable, but a most patriotic office. You are socialists in the true, the Christian sense of the word—the cementers of society,—the best friends of civil order,—the most efficient moral police,—the best national guard,—the most unobjectional and powerful standing army.

Rev. C. F. Childe, *Islington.*

THE DEACON'S FIRESIDE....NO. II.

"Good evening, Mr. M." said Deacon Oldschool to Mr. M., as he entered the house a little while after the prayer meeting, which they had both attended, was out.

Mr. M. was one of those men who are not satisfied with the present state of the world, nor with any of the efforts which are put forth to make it better. But what he was, will be seen from the conversation which took place between him and the deacon.

Mr. M.—"Why was not the minister at meeting, to-night?"

Dea. O.—"*Our* minister has gone to meet with the Association.

Mr. M.—"We don't have such ministers as they used to have in old times. There is something out of the way somewhere. Ministers hav n't the weight with the people which they used to have."

Dea. O.—"I know there is something out of the way somewhere, and there always will be where human nature is; I know the case is different between ministers and people from what it was forty years ago. But I'm disposed to lay the blame on the people, rather than on the ministers."

Mr. M.—"If the ministers were as good as they used to

be, the people would be so too; 'like priest, like people,' you know."

Dea. O.—I believe that is n't scripture. But all responsibility with reference to the conduct of the church, does not rest on the ministry, and I think as a general thing, the ministry of the present, as compared with that of former generations, is more learned, more abundant in labors, and more devoted."

Mr. M.—" Well, I know the people used to think a great deal more of their ministers, than they do now."

Dea. O.—" I know they did, and it may be, because they thought less of themselves than they do now. At any rate, they thought the minister capable of teaching them, and they were willing to be taught, and did n't complain if he did n't tell them stories all the time."

Mr. M.—" Do you think our minister visits as much as he ought?"

Dea. O.—" I presume he does. He visits as much as he has time to; and it can't be his duty to visit more."

Mr. M.—" I don't know that. He has n't been in my house but twice since January. I don't see how he can have so much to do, that he can't visit but twice in nearly a year. What reason have you to think that he visits as much as he has time too?"

Dea. O.—Because he *says so.* I consider that he is the best judge of the manner in which it is his duty to spend his time. He has n't been at my house once since January, as I recollect, but I do n't complain. I do n't think he wastes any time. I never found him idle in my life."

Mr. M.—You do n't say he has n't been in your house since January? I thought that he went there, and to some other places very often. He goes to Judge Hall's pretty often, don't he?"

Dea. O.—" I do not know. My impression is that he goes there very seldom.

Mr. M.—"He do n't do right then, for the Judge is a very important spoke in our wheel, and ought to be seen to."

Dea. O.—"I believe he is faithful to the Judge as he is to the rest of us."

Mr. M.—"Do n't you think he bears down sometimes a little too hard on moral men; the Judge, you know, thinks a good deal of his morality and honor. I have been afraid he would have been driven off to the other society. We must use some policy, you know, or we can't get along in this world. The minister, I think, rather lacks in that respect."

Dea. O.—"I don't agree with you. I think he is a man of very profound policy. His policy is to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God. That, I take it, is the only true policy.

Mr. M.—"The minister is a very good man, I can't say he is a very great man. Hav n't you thought sometimes that if we had a man of more talent, that more people would come out; that the society would be larger?"

Dea. O.—"No, I can't say that I have ever had any such thoughts. Esq. R., is the most of a reading man among us. He is satisfied that our minister knows enough and has talent enough to instruct and edify him. If there are those whose minds require something higher, they ought to have compassion on their weaker brethren, who are so much profited and edified that they would not be willing to exchange their minister for any one.

Mr. M.—"I can get along with him very well myself, but there are a good many more than you think for, who would like a change. There are a good many who would like such a man as Mr. Jehu of L. He is doing a great work there."

Dea. O.—"He did a great work in the last place in which he was settled before he went to L. They hav n't had a minister settled there since, nor hardly any preaching.

Mr. M.—"He may be a little too much engaged some-

times, but it is better to have a little too much life than none at all. There is very little life among our people at present, that's certain."

Dea. O.—"You have stated a painful fact, and it seems to me that we should inquire into it, and the causes of this state of things among us. I think that we shall find that we have all been guilty, and all need to repent and humble ourselves before God. If every member of the church should thus examine himself and humble himself before God, we should see the beginnings of better days.

Mr. M.—"I think so too. But the people are not apt to move in this way, unless the minister stir them up and set the example."

Dea. O.—"Our minister has been trying to do this, for a long time. His sermon on the difficulties in the way of a revival, last Sabbath, was very pointed and powerful, didn't you think so?"

Mr. M.—"Last Sabbath, let me see—in the forenoon I was not out."

Dea. O.—"It was the afternoon sermon that I spoke of."

Mr. M.—"I must have heard it then, for I was there, for I remember taking notice that Judge Hall was not there."

Dea. O.—"Pardon me, Br. M., but I don't think you heard it; as you set right in a line between me and the minister, I could not help seeing that you were asleep all the time, except for a moment or so, after your wife waked you because you snored so loud as to be heard all over the house."

Mr. M.—"A body will fall asleep sometimes in spite of themselves. Good night. J. A.

Williams College.

He who removes the impediment that prevents a scholar from sharing in the benefits of the Sabbath school, should be valued as a co-worker, whether that impediment be the want of inclination, or the want of suitable clothing.

WE LIVE NOT TO OURSELVES.

Oh, why should earth enchain the mind,
Why should its fleeting pleasures bind
The deathless soul;
Which sojourns in this vale of tears,
A few brief days or months, or years,
And then is gone?
Why should its cares and sorrows make
The burdened heart with anguish ache;
While Jesus lives?
Our great High Priest, whose tender heart
In all our sorrows bears a part,
And strength bestows.
While God, our Father, dwells above,
In that bright realm of holy love,
To which we haste,
O may the grace the gospel brings,
Withdraw our hearts from earthly things,
Pointing above.
Our simple aim, then may it be
A high and noble destiny,
Here to fulfil.
To honor God by lives of faith,
To rescue souls from endless death,
From Satan's reign.
Then welcome, when our sun goes down
Perhaps at night, perchance at noon,
The light of life. F.

INSTRUCTIVE INCIDENT.

Say not that your powers are feeble and your opportunities small. A young woman who was an operative in a factory, became a subject of divine grace, and united with the Christian church. From early morn till night she was, through the week, engaged in labor. She had never enjoyed the advantages of school, excepting barely enough to have learned to read and to write. But her heart, kindled with the fire of sacred love, intensely desired to promote the Redeemer's

kingdom. To this end she set herself diligently to the cultivation of her mind. She devoted half an hour every evening to study, and used all other available means to prepare herself for usefulness. She used often to place a leaf of the Bible upon her loom, and to commit and digest its contents while her hands wrought. Within a single year, she became one of the best teachers in the Sabbath school, and was instrumental in bringing four of her pupils to a saving knowledge of Christ. *Go thou and do likewise.* Who is there present, whose abilities and opportunities are not equal to hers?—*Winslow's Lecture to S. S. Teachers.*

ERIE COUNTY, N. Y. SABBATH SCHOOL ASSOCIATION.

We have received from some unknown friend, "The Western Cataract" of Nov. 13, 1845, which contains a full account of the Annual Meeting of the Erie County Sabbath School Association, held Sept. 24th, at Buffalo, Western N. Y.

The Association, as appears from the Report, was organized in the First Presbyterian Church, Buffalo, in the summer of 1841. Since then the President, Secretary and other members of the Executive Committee, have been accustomed to make frequent tours to different parts of the county, for the purpose of visiting and organizing Sabbath schools, addressing parents and children, and aiding in the cultivation of music in the schools. More of this labor was performed in 1842 and 1843, than during the previous and succeeding years. There was an increase, in 1842, of attendance upon the various Sabbath schools in the county, of about 1500 children, and in 1843, of 1000.—Since the 1st of August, 1845, the Association has employed a Sabbath school missionary, who has delivered from one to seven lectures on the subject of Sabbath schools, in each town in the county, excepting four—in all between sixty and seventy addresses. Besides these, Sabbath school celebrations have been held in ten of the towns, and

with one exception these meetings have been numerously attended by parents, teachers, children, and friends generally. Appropriate, interesting, and instructive addresses, it is said, were delivered to these several classes of persons, by clergymen and others.

In connection with these celebrations, much interest has been manifested by parents, teachers, and children in singing. The report contains important statistical information respecting the state of Sabbath and common schools in the county, from which we may give an extract in a future number.

WANT OF QUALIFIED TEACHERS.

[The Sabbath School Teachers' Association, of Cincinnati, at a meeting in September last, appointed a committee to visit the various schools, and report upon their condition and the state of the Sabbath school cause in the City. In December this committee presented a very interesting Report, embracing a great number of statistical facts, and practical suggestions, in relation to the fifty-one protestant schools in the city and liberties. Copies of this Report we have received, and the following extract will be found appropriate for the Visiter.]

The committee found much in the schools, to approve and commend:—some of them are certainly conducted with great wisdom and efficiency; and the perseverance, self-devotion, and anxiety shown by many engaged in them to elevate the character, and extend the influence of the Sabbath school system is highly encouraging. At the same time we cannot but see that there are serious evils and deficiencies existing in most of the schools, which impair their usefulness, and hinder the promotion of the Sabbath school to the station which it ought to occupy.

The want of well qualified teachers has been mentioned by several superintendents as a great hindrance to the prosperity of the schools, and your committee cannot but regard this as a source of most of the evils which stand in the way of the advancement and improvement of the Sabbath school system.

The present position of the Sabbath school and its future usefulness call for the services of the most intelligent and pious members of the Christian church; and it should be the constant aim of the superintendent to secure such as teachers. There has been a most censurable looseness in the admission of teachers in many schools, and the indifference and inefficiency so much deplored in them may be attributed in a great measure to this cause. It does not follow, as a matter of course, that every *master* or *miss*, because they have been for years in a school, and have passed through its several grades, are qualified to teach; or that any one in our congregations who wishes to try his hand at teaching, must be admitted. It is not every one that is fitted to teach in the Sabbath, any more than in other schools; and as the time of instruction is short, greater tact is needed here than elsewhere to accomplish the greatest amount of good. In admitting teachers the superintendent should look to their character for steadiness and perseverance; the probability of their being constant and punctual in attendance; see that they possess soundness of judgment; correct views of the duties in which they are to engage; a faculty for governing children and imparting instruction; and above all, *personal piety*. For want of attention to these requisites and a desire to press into the service, where there is such a constant demand for more laborers, all who are willing to enter, many are engaged in our schools as teachers who have no adequate idea of the responsibilities of the station, and take little or no pains to prepare themselves for the discharge of its important duties. The cause has thus sustained great injury, and the evil results of this course have been brought so prominently to our view, that we shall mention some of them particularly.

[The topics that are presented by the committee, are so important and practical, and we fear so deserving consideration in New England, that we give them in future numbers.]

THOUGHTS, SUGGESTED BY THE RETURN OF THE ANNUAL FAST.

Ye earthly joys! your vivid colors hide;
Come, sober thought, appropriate to the day,
Possess my mind,—direct to useful views,
And cherish pleasures that forbid decay.

'Tis not amid the busy scenes of life,
The walks of pleasure, or the road of fame,
That sacred contemplation lends its aid
To guide my footsteps in the path I aim.

Would I hold converse with the God I love,
Or strictly search this busy heart within,
Let my soul seek retirement's friendly shade,
And lose the impression of a world of sin.

Secluded thus, the retrospect of life
Presents a scene which startles me to view:
What wasted hours! what idle thoughts arise!
How little done! how vast the work to do!

How many firm resolves, and well-wrought plans,
Have, through the closing year been born to die!
Memorials only of a faint desire
To raise my heart, and thoughts, and hopes on high.

Earth, with its blandishments on every side,
And passions, kindling at the slightest lure,
Too oft have drawn me into folly's path,
Where anguish,—bitter anguish was my cure.

And is not vanity inscribed at large
On all the hosts of objects now pursued?
My "field of vision" filled with empty forms,
The mind, immortal, languishing for food!

Awake! ye dormant powers of the soul!
And snatch the film from off the mental eye;
Converse with scenes beyond the bounds of time,
And bring, by faith, th' amazing prospect nigh.

The past examine,—present conduct scan,
The motives scrutinize with anxious care;
The good with ardor seek, and greatly prize,
The bad and doubtful cautiously forbear.

Let the broad stream of life, henceforth unfold
A course, transparent,—fair to every eye;
Winding its path along the earthly vale;
And sweetly leading to the fields on high! H. Y.

THE

CONGREGATIONAL VISITER.

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THE SABBATH SCHOOL CONCERT.

The object of the articles which we publish under this head, is not merely to stimulate and encourage all who attend the Sabbath School Concert to a faithful performance of their duties, but to give facts, and to suggest hints and illustrations which the conductor of the concert, by expanding and applying, may use to interest and impress the minds of the children who may be present on those occasions.

One great end which, whoever conducts the Sabbath School Concert, should be, as it appears to us, ever kept in view, is, to point out to the young the danger that they incur by associating, in their childish sports, with the vicious and profane among their youthful companions, and having shown them the need of the upholding and preserving grace of God in a world like this, to lead them for security to the Saviour, in whom alone they can find righteousness and strength.

Our children, as soon as they set foot in the world, are assailed by a legion of temptations which are calculated, not only to arouse and strengthen all the evil passions of the heart, but to keep them from attending to the instruction

which might be the means of their salvation. Not long ago, a boy about ten years of age, was turned out of one of our schools for disobedient and vicious conduct. I asked him how it happened that he, so young, and with such faithful instruction as he had received, should be so self-willed and perverse? I shall never forget his reply, for it brought to view one of the most fruitful sources of evil to our children, especially in our cities and large towns, with which we have to contend. "The reason," said the boy, "why I am so bad, is that I run in the streets, and play with older and wicked boys so much."

Now let the conductor of the Sabbath School Concert communicate a fact like this, and expand and apply it so as to make both parents and children aware that the great school of vice is the street, and that there is infinite danger in walking in the counsel of the ungodly, in standing in the way of sinners, and in sitting in the seat of the scornful. This fact, thus applied, may possibly awaken parents to the importance of making home so pleasant to their children, that they shall not desire to associate with rude and vicious boys in the street, and also of deterring the children from a course so perilous to their character and their souls.

Perhaps, too, the importance of guarding against the beginnings of vice, may, at such a season, be illustrated by some striking fact in nature which may have been noticed by the scholars.

At the bottom of my garden there was once a young quince tree of great beauty and promise, which I expected would some day supply me with a sufficient quantity of its peculiar fruit. When the tree had attained about one half of its size, I noticed that the tender shoot of a grape-vine had sprung up at its root, and was stretching forth its fine tendrils towards its neighbor for support. Without much thought about the matter, I suffered "both to grow together," until the vine had

begun to clasp the tree with strong and numerous folds, and then, instead of plucking up the insidious parasite, I left them both to the course of nature. Soon the vine, having wound itself around the body of the tree, spread itself among and over the branches, until at length the poor tree, oppressed and stifled by the unnatural load, began to show symptoms of decay. In short, after maintaining, as it were, a brief conflict with its enemy, my beautiful little tree yielded to its fate, and died, while the vine, sustained by the dead trunk, continued for years to flourish, although nothing but wild grapes were ever gathered from it.

So, we might tell the unwary youth, does an insidious passion appear in the heart, and if not at once suppressed, gradually overspread the mind, and twine itself about every faculty, until at length the whole soul, oppressed, stifled, and exhausted, yields itself up to the overshadowing evil, and sinks into the torpor of the second death. With such apparently trifling incidents, the conductor of a meeting may, perhaps, be able to produce a decided and salutary impression upon the minds of his young hearers, which, by the grace of God, may result in their conversion.

ELLEN NEWPORT.

A SKETCH FROM LIFE.

With his mother's milk the young child drinketh Education.

Patience is the first great lesson: he may learn it at the breast: and the habit of OBEDIENCE and TRUST may be grafted on his mind in the cradle.

Give him not all his desire, so shalt thou strengthen him in hope: Neither stop with indulgence the fountain of his tears, so shall he fear thy firmness.

Above all things, graft on him subjection, *yea, in the veriest trifle;* courtesy to all, reverence to some, and to thee, *unanswering obedience.*

Proverbial Philosophy.

In observation of the government of families, we are often struck by a want of firmness on the part of parents, when the will of the child rises in opposition to their own. It may be

some trivial circumstance, but one on which hang consequences of infinite magnitude,—a whole eternity may be the result of one hour's insubordination, and every judicious parent will carefully watch the first indications of that spirit, which may, if indulged, bring sorrow and unavailing regret to their heart,—if subdued, will yield a rich repayment of love and gratitude, both on earth and in heaven!

Instances have repeatedly been related to me of the *first trial* for power between parent and child. Some very trifling matter would be the subject of contest, and hours, perhaps, ensue, before any yielding came from the youthful offender;—when once conquered, however, it was but the beginning of good things, for the lesson of parental authority thus early enforced, was deeply impressed upon the memory, and preserved the child from a repetition of its fault.

Not long since an incident occurred in my presence, which confirmed me in the opinion that every parent may overcome the will of a child, and that affection, blended with decision and firmness, are the weapons by which to conquer,—*that* affection which is willing to suffer for the sake of benefiting another, for every father or mother who truly undertakes a case of discipline with a beloved child, will have their feelings sorely tried before the victory is won.

Ellen Newport was the only daughter of a clergyman,—a child deeply loved, and certainly as likely to win her way in any scheme and wish, as any one could be, for her remarkable maturity of mind and quickness of apprehension, united to a most affectionate heart, had rendered her a great favorite in her home. There was about her a charm, which seemed irresistible; and many parents would not have insisted upon her obedience to every word, especially when those blue eyes were silently, yet so eloquently, pleading for indulgence. But with her warm affections and intellectual precocity, our young friend possessed an unusual amount of self-will, and a quiet determination to carry her own point, which occasionally gave

her some trouble. Happy was it for Ellen that her parents balanced their love with good judgment and unalterable firmness, and in all matters of government they harmonized perfectly.

Seated beside Ellen one Sabbath noon, she desired me to hand her a book which I had been reading. She was always trained to habits of courtesy, and to observe those minor points of politeness so neglected by many children. She was taught to acknowledge the reception of any favor, however trivial, by saying "thank you." This she omitted to do in the present instance, which her father observing, took her hand, and gently drawing her towards him, said, "Ellen, you should thank your cousin." The child was silent; she was unwilling to do that which did not just at the moment, suit her mood, and stood with her eyes bent on the floor, apparently regardless of her father's implied request.

Mr. Newport gave her a little time to reflect, and come quietly to the decision that it was best to obey soon, for she was now five years old, and had had opportunities before of knowing that in such a struggle as the present, she had never yet conquered.

Her hand still lay clasped in that of her father. Suddenly she raised her eyes, full of tears,—her lips quivered,—it seemed as if she were ready to make the desired acknowledgment,—but not a word would she utter.

"Will you say it, Ellen?" inquired her father, kindly.

Through the whole scene, until now, Mr. Newport's manner had been unchanged. He had gently, but firmly required obedience; but as his authority was thus disregarded, his own naturally impetuous spirit was roused, and for a moment, for the first time during long years of acquaintance, did I behold Mr. Newport manifest excited feelings;—it was only a moment, for the deep love of his nature instantly resumed its sway, to conquer not by violence, a heart so like his own, and his expression changed to one of tenderness and sympathy.

PACIFIC SCHOOL RELIGION

How often do parents, in their discipline, *forget that they have been young*—forget the headstrong will of their childhood, which in maturer years was only brought under their own power by the controlling influence of religion—they forget that the very passions with which they are every day conflicting in their children, are transmitted from themselves—a sorrowful dower they often prove, replete with suffering to the receiver—a dower the parent would willingly spare his child—which the child would pray might be averted if prayers could avail to secure them against such a mournful inheritance. How often have parents been made to reap in their children the effects of their own early insubordination, and a youth of careless or profligate habits.

As Mr. Newport sat watching his daughter, the dinner-bel rang—no one moved to answer its summons; there seemed to be a tacit understanding between those who looked on, and the actors in this scene, that the victory must be won *then*, not deferred to an uncertain future—while Mr. Newport, absorbed in the thought of the importance of the present discipline to his darling child, neither heeded nor heard aught else.

If he now relaxed his authority—if he now suffered Ellen to gain an advantage by the triumph of her own will, the next attempt to subdue her would cost each ten times the effort of the present.

It is hard to see a child suffer—hard to see them struggling with feelings with which we know how to sympathize from experience; but the father of Ellen Newport realized too deeply the consequences resulting from any indecision on his part to relinquish his point. It was a true test of his affection for her, that he could not for a moment consent to balance present indulgence against future evil. "A mountain is made up of atoms," and a child's character of the trivial circumstances of every day life—when every event leaves a trace on the spirit, and the *heart*, as well as the mind, feels

the influence of each hour of discipline. Happy is that child who can *love* the hand that chastens!

After a short conflict, Ellen looked up through her tears at her father, and said in a very low tone, "Thank you."

"Turn to your cousin, and say it," said Mr. Newport.

This, too, Ellen resisted for a moment, but at length obeyed, to the great joy of those who had witnessed this long struggle, as well as that of her father, whose feelings had been deeply moved by this manifestation of a rebellious, perverse spirit, in a child so dear to him, and over the unfolding of whose really beautiful character he watched with so much interest.

In one moment, as Ellen yielded obedience to her father's command, his arms received the weeping, penitent, but now happy child, who, clinging to him, laid her head upon his shoulder,—her tears soon wiped away by love and sympathy;—mingled with the whispered words of Ellen, were the soothing and affectionate assurances of her father, and no one who witnessed the scene, feared a very early recurrence of it.

Mrs. Newport happened to be absent during the whole time. She came from her room at the summons of the bell, and finding no one in the dining-room, came to gather up the missing members of her family. As she opened the door of the parlor, the cause of the delay explained itself; and as she took a glimpse of the group, she made no comment, well knowing her husband had managed the whole matter with his usual discretion and kindness, and satisfied to wait for a relation of the *cause* and *effect* when Ellen should not be present. At the table, Ellen sat close beside her father, and her countenance expressed the perfect peace of her spirit, while her whole manner was more than usually subdued and gentle.

W. R. T.

[*To be continued.*]

SABBATH SCHOOL EXPERIENCE.

[The London S. S. Teacher's Magazine contains the Sabbath school experience of a teacher who had been actively engaged in the cause for nearly twenty years. The first two years of his labors he was destitute of personal piety, and consequently unable, with feeling and earnestness, to recommend to his scholars, the "great salvation." His Sabbath school experience, after his conversion, he thus describes:]

A new creation, in all its brightness and blessedness, broke upon me, and with adoring gratitude, I now consecrated myself to God and his service. I began afresh my Sabbath school labors, and they became emphatically "labors of love." Higher and purer motives influenced me. I "steeped" my lessons in prayer. I found, too, that religion clears the intellect, gives vigor to the understanding, and, by the power of divine love, enables the teacher to win the respect and affection of the scholars. When it was well with me, it began to be better with my class; and in a little while evident improvement was exhibited. God gave his blessing, and signs and wonders followed, in the order, diligence, and serious attention of my scholars, and in the conversion of some of them to God. These were happy days;—I love to linger upon them.

"O, long be my heart with such memories filled!"

Since then I have continued in the faith and service of Christ, walking in company with the young people confided to me, in the way to the "kingdom." Some of these immortal youths have fallen asleep in Jesus. They were enabled to witness a good confession. I have watched by them while passing through the dark valley of the shadow of death, cheering their faith and hopes, and directing them to Him,

"Who had done too much, to leave them now."

We have shaken hands, and parted, in the hope of a happy re-union above. But a few of my young people have retro-

gressed. Their stay was short with us. Not deciding for God, the school lost its charm, and they became the prey of the tempter. One of this class accosted me about a month ago. I had forgotten him, but he recognized me as his teacher years gone by; and confessed he had not, and could not, forget the truths learned in the school. A goodly number of my scholars remain unto this day, living sober, and righteous, and godly lives; filling various offices of usefulness; and one whom I rejoice in, is preaching with ability and zeal, the gospel of the grace of God.

KEEPING A RECORD OF SCHOLARS.

On looking back, I find many have escaped me of whom I can give no account whatever; and if the Great Teacher should inquire of me concerning these, "Where is the flock that I gave thee?" I must stand before him abashed and speechless. May I entreat my fellow-teachers to keep a careful record of the character and progress of every scholar of their classes, and so be enabled to give at any time, an exact account of them—to follow them into the world, and maintain an interest in them by visit or correspondence—and never to lose sight of them, until they have been brought into the fold, and to a saving acquaintance with Christ. And, at the same time, I would affectionately urge upon all teachers who may be without a personal interest in Christ, to seek and obtain this inestimable blessing without delay. My want of this in the outset of my career caused me to lose much valuable time. Would to God that the thousands of teachers in this country were all savingly converted to him, and all doing the Master's work in his divinely-appointed way, and under the influence of his Holy Spirit. Then, indeed, would our schools be nurseries for the church, and become a praise in the earth.

REMINISCENCES OF SABBATH NOON AT THE PARSONAGE.

The Sabbath,—what precious and delightful associations cluster upon the recollection of this quiet portion of our toil-some life.

Poets have sung of the sweet stillness of the *morning* of the hallowed day, and we have often enjoyed anew the peaceful scenes of its quiet evenings, in a sweet Sabbath hymn. The Lord of the Sabbath has made its hours *all* precious, and let pious poets sing its praises.

How cheering to wake at early dawn, before the shadows flee away, and know that the blessed day, so mercifully appointed by our Maker, has again returned; and how consoling, as we repose again on our pillows at night, to reflect, that week after week of toil and care, will end at such holy resting places.

Who but will respond to the language of Doddridge,

"Thine earthly Sabbaths, Lord, we love."

Memory delights to dwell upon the Sabbath *Noon* of my childhood, especially on those cold wintry days, when, after the morning service, a portion of the congregation would gather around a large log fire, in an old-fashioned fire-place in the pastor's kitchen, the doors of which were always open, and the room made comfortable for the reception of any who might wish to spend their intermission there.

Meeting-houses in the country had then no stoves, and there were no Sabbath schools to occupy the time of those who stayed at noon. The long settle, with its high back, screening those who sat upon it from the current of air from the numerous doors of the spacious kitchen, was drawn up at one end of the fire-place, and chairs were furnished to make up the circ'e.

After a passing remark upon the coldness of the weather, sickness and health, general and particular, among the people,

one after another would repair to the dresser for a tract or other serious book, deposited there by their pastor.

In those days lived "Old Grandsir B." He used to walk nearly four miles to meeting, and that even in very cold weather, so earnest was he to hear the preached word.

I well remember how the venerable old man looked, as he entered the meeting-house doors, and walked up the broad-aisle, with his buskins tied over his shoes, and his blue and white handkerchief placed smoothly over his head and pinned under his chin. The handkerchief, serving the purpose both of a wig and ear cap, was always worn during service.

He used to take his place in one of the long body seats, as they were called, in front of the pulpit, and he seemed to drink in every word the pastor uttered, with a zest which few seem now to experience, because few take so much pains to enjoy the privilege.

Happy pilgrim! He has reached his journey's end, and we believe he is at rest. But his widow yet lives, with a character, in the estimation of her Christian friends, well nigh as pure as were the diamond white spots in that blue 'kerchief. I have looked upon that head-dress when I should have been thinking of other things, and wondered how it could so long be kept entirely unsullied.

When Mr. B. was able to be at meeting, he was a regular visiter at the parsonage on Sabbath noons. Being quite old, he used to be invited to take a seat with the family in the sitting-room, and warm himself with a cup of hot tea. The children were always pleased to see him, for he loved "the babies" as he called us. He taught us to call him "Grandsir B." As soon as he entered the room, before he sat down, he used to call one of us, to draw from his ample pocket the package of "saucer cakes" which his "woman" had made for "the babies," and such cakes as were made by "grandma'am B." "the babies" never tasted elsewhere. One of "grandma'am's" saucers must have been as large as a small pan, for the cake could not enter that great pocket without

being halved, and, though the children were numerous, there was a generous piece for each.

But "grandsir B." had not always borne the character here described. He had been a drunkard, and when under the influence of strong drink, one of the most savage sort. Reformed inebriates were not common in those days, but Mrs. B. had learned what some of this generation have at length found out, that even the drunkard may be won by kindness.

It is not uncommon for the inebriate to mourn over the strength of his appetite, and promise again and again that he will reform. This was the case with "grandsir B.," and on these occasions, although it seemed oftentimes like hoping against hope, his "good woman" would always encourage him. There were two articles besides ardent spirits, of which he was very fond. These were such cakes as have been named, and *good warm coffee*. Always when the old gentleman went to market, his wife stored his pocket with cakes; and he was sure, on his return, to find in readiness plenty of hot coffee.

Unceasing love and kindness, showing itself in every possible way, and persevering prayer at length prevailed. Although at the eleventh hour, he entirely reformed. And what a change was that! It will not cease, through eternity, to be matter of gratitude and praise; for he became not only a *temperate man*, but, as we believe, a *Christian*.

His wife, after his reformation, enjoyed his society for several years before death separated them. She has been now a long time looking forward with ardent hope and strong desire, for a re-union in a better world. Though no longer able to attend meeting, her Sabbaths are foretastes of heaven. Her Bible is a rich treasure—her Saviour, the chiefest among ten thousand. She can never again meet the people of God in his earthly sanctuary, but expects soon to go,

"Where the assembly ne'er breaks up,
The Sabbath ne'er shall end."

A. D.

EULOGISTIC VERSES ON TYNDALE THE MARTYR.

The picture of this distinguished martyr preserved in Magdalen Hall, Oxford, represents him with a Bible in his hand, and this distich:—

Hac ut luce tuas dispergam, Roma, tenebras,
Sponte extorris ero, sponte sacrificium.

That light o'er all thy darkness, Rome,
With triumph might arise
An exile freely I become,
Freely a sacrifice.

Underneath an old copper Portrait of Tyndale, engraved in Holland's "Heroologia," is the following Latin inscription:—

Te puram docuit Christi Sapientia legem
TYNDALLE, *optatæ quæ tibi causa necis.*

[*Freely translated.*]

O Tyndale! Christ instructed thee,
His pure law made thee wise,
To win the martyr's glorious crown,
That rare, celestial prize.

[*Another translation.*]

Thy Lord, O Tyndale, made thee wise,
His pure law was thy richest prize;
For thee the martyr's crown it won,
The highest fame beneath the sun.

[The character of Tyndale is thus drawn by old Francis Quarles, the author of the "Emblems."]

"Zeal crowned his heart, and made him to outvie
Papistic stories of hell-bred tyranny;
He feared them not, but boldly would dispute
Against their swelling errors, and confute
Their principles with a most dexterous art;
His tongue was never traitor to his heart.
Truth was the hand that pointed to the way,
Where full content and rich salvation lay.
'T was not a loathsome prison could divorce
His ready lips from the profound discourse
Of true religion; nothing could prevent
His just endeavors. Time, he thought, misspent
If not employed in good. Reader, admire!
His body flamed to make his soul a-fire."

[*London*] *S. S. Teachers' Magazine.*

A SUPERINTENDENT'S APOLOGY.

A FEW evenings since, says the New York Sabbath School Monitor, we attended a Sabbath School Concert in this city, at which we were to address the children. The superintendent of the school is a very punctual man, but it so happened that this evening he was a few minutes too late; and when he came in, the exercises had commenced. The superintendent thought an apology was called for, and he made one so happy, and so instructive to both teachers and scholars, that we think he will pardon us for giving it to our readers, as nearly as we can now recollect it:

"My dear children," he said, "I owe you an apology for being late to-night. I had the impression, I hardly know how, that the hour for commencing was a quarter before eight, instead of half past seven. I feel mortified because I was not here at the time; and the mortification is greater, as *this is the first time I have been late for sixteen years.* I do not wish to excuse myself, however, at all. On the contrary, I assure you that my want of punctuality was the result of carelessness, nothing else. So I hope no one will ever plead my example as an excuse for being late. There is no excuse for not being in season. Carelessness is almost always at the bottom of it, as it was in this instance."

TEACHER'S RELATION TO THE PASTOR.

[Rev. Mr. Childe, of Islington, in an address before the Church of England Sunday School Institute, makes the following judicious remarks in regard to the teacher's relation to the pastor.]

As a teacher, it is your primary duty to seek the acquaintance, sanction, and approval of your own *spiritual pastor.* Thus did the founder of the system, the venerated Raikes, and approved himself in all things a fellow-helper to his min-

ister. Nothing could be more fatal to order, more unfaithful to the design of your office, than a desire for independence of action ; nothing more destructive of your efficiency. By an affectionate, confidential, yet respectful intercourse with him, you will learn to enter into ministerial sympathies, acquire an insight into ministerial trials and responsibilities, and so be quickened to more importunate and fervent intercessions in behalf of those who watch for your souls.

THE WORD OF GOD HID IN THE HEART.

We hide the word of God in our heart, when we read it, love it, remember it, and submit to it. We hide it in our heart, when we so possess it that we habitually obey it in our thoughts, affections, words and actions. But how can we thus hide it in our hearts, without having it treasured up in our memory, and ready at the command of our recollection? We need to know the truths of God's Word, as the apothecary knows his medicines. He knows what medicines he has, and where they are, so that he can lay his hand upon them at once, when called for. But how sad would be the confusion of his shop, if his medicines were all thrown together in a mass, and he could not readily find a particular article, nor even be sure at once whether he had it or not! We need to have the words of God at our command as thoroughly as the apothecary has his medicines. We need to have them thus hid in our heart, each, as it were, in its proper place, or so connected, associated, or arranged in our minds, as an apothecary's medicines in his boxes, that we can at once recall the truths or words which we wish to use.

To do this we must be very familiar with some words of God—not merely with the truths they contain, but with the very words which contain them. We want to use the very words of Scripture. No words will serve us better than those

identical words, "Thy word have I hid in mine heart"—thy very word—or that very word into which the careful study of many wise and good men has translated God's Word. How can I so suddenly on an emergency command better words? No. I want the very words of God; and that I may have them at command, I must commit them to memory.

God has constructed his word with this apparent design. Some portions of the Scriptures in the Hebrews, are composed alphabetically; that is, the first verse begins with the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet; the second verse with the second letter, and so on. In this manner chapters 1, 2, and 4 of Lamentations are constructed. In chapter 3d, the first three verses begin with the first letter, the second three with the second letter, and so on. In Psalm 119, the first eight verses begin with the first letter; the second eight verses with the second letter, and so on through the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet. Psalms 25, 34, 37, 111, 112 and 145, are so constructed in general. The design of this arrangement was, without doubt, to aid the memory.

Since, then, God would have his people of old, hide in their hearts the very words he gave them, let us hide in our hearts the words of truth which are graciously provided us; and let us use all such helps for this purpose as we can devise, or such as others have devised for us. F. C.

"To arrest the attention, to cultivate the understanding, and to excite the feelings, so that these may all harmonize, should be the constant object of the teacher; otherwise, the just balance of mind which should exist between the teacher and the scholars will become so unequal, that those communications which were designed for good, may either not attain to their full elevation, or being destitute of some essential property needful for efficiency, may leave a shadow, instead of a substance, or at most, produce a sickly, instead of a thriving plant."

THE GREAT DECEIVER.

"The heart is deceitful above all things." Others may deceive, but this is the great deceiver. In its power to blind the eye and ensnare the steps of man, it has no rival. To illustrate this fact, we may notice the manner in which men yield themselves to every flattering delusion, and are beguiled of heaven. True religion evidently is founded on right views of God, and right views of man. If God, the great object of religious worship, be not understood, or man, the subject of religious impression, be viewed in a false light, then erroneous doctrines will be believed, and a wrong standard of duty adopted. And how widely has the device of human imagination departed from the simplicity of truth in both these respects! how incorrect and foolish the judgment of the great mass of mankind concerning both God and man. True it is, and stamped on every page of man's history, that "the world by wisdom, knew not God," neither by wisdom did they know themselves.

Look out on the entire heathen world in every generation. How "vain their imaginations" of God and man; "their foolish heart was darkened; professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and to four-footed beasts, and creeping things." But these blinded idolaters are not the only persons whom the heart deceives in the knowledge of God. "As in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man." It is true of the whole human family, where the light of revelation has not shined, that "the world by wisdom knew not God." And even those who have the Bible are easily blinded. Many, like Israel of old, judge that Jehovah is like one of themselves, and therefore try all the principles of his government, and scrutinize all his attributes, with as overweening confidence and presumption, as if they were sitting in judg-

ment on a fellow-worm. Thus some object to the charge of sin being brought against them. They hastily reason that it cannot be so great an evil as to deserve everlasting banishment from the presence of the Lord. On this rash assumption they explain away all the plain language in which Jehovah attaches this fearful penalty to its commission. Others declare that God's justice is overcome by his mercy, though he styles himself a *just* God as well as a Saviour, and has solemnly declared that he "will by no means spare the guilty." Thus they rob God of his sceptre, and reduce him to a weak and powerless sovereign, too mild to vindicate his law, and maintain the integrity of his throne. To another class the heart whispers that God is a sovereign and has immutably fixed every event, so that it only remains to them to wait in passive submission for him to make them partakers of his grace. Under this delusion they wrap themselves in deep sleep; and all the commands and motives of the gospel fail to arouse them to "work out their own salvation with fear and trembling."

Such are some of the vain imaginations of the heart respecting God. They are fruitful sources of error; and though alike contradictory to reason and Scripture, are eagerly embraced. Some of them are gross and absurd, as idolatry and pagan worship, fit only for savage and uncultivated communities. Other forms are more refined, and adapted to more enlightened minds. Some contain a mixture of truth; others are perversions of real doctrines of Scripture, and may prevail under the light of the Bible. The net is skilfully woven and cunningly spread to allure and ensnare all classes.

While man thus deceives himself concerning God, he is not less ready to listen to flattering lies respecting himself. The aim of the heart, in its imaginations of God, is to disarm him of his terrors, and weaken the restraints of his law and justice upon transgressors. Its aim, in its thoughts of man, is to remove the conviction of sin, and make him satis-

fied with his character without repentance and submission to God for pardon. Thus are fostered the pretensions and hopes of the self-righteous. Thus the Pharisee stood and prayed, not as a sinner to plead for mercy, but a self-sufficient moralist, to boast of his virtues, and claim their reward. This is a wide-spread delusion. It is one agreeable to any feeling of the natural man ; and one which, when it takes full possession of the spirit, entwines itself so fondly around man's depraved passions, that it is a "strong man armed," keeping guard of the citadel. It is found in varying degrees in different persons. All are not so strongly entrenched as the Pharisee. Some are ready to acknowledge themselves sinners to some extent, but not that "in them dwelleth no good thing" nor that "their heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." These are yet deceived, for they have not embraced the *whole* truth ; and the mingling of their "vain imaginations" with the word of life, holds them so ensnared, that they do not break off their sin by repentance.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

EFFECT OF FAITHFULNESS.

MR. E. had a class of seven lads about 14 years of age. As none of them gave evidence of piety, their *conversion* became a special object of his daily desire and prayer, and of his faithful labors in the class. He was accustomed to converse with each member individually, in regard to his salvation, and all his instructions were highly practical and direct. So far from fearing that this course of *faithfulness* would offend his pupils and break up his class, he felt confident that this was the surest way to gain their attention and regard, and secure their willing and interested attendance. And he felt, also, that their good and the glory of God demanded of him this faithfulness.

The class directly in front of Mr. E. consisted of seven

lads, about the same age of his own. But the teacher seemed to have no just apprehension of the duties and responsibilities of his station. The exercises of the class consisted in merely asking and answering the questions of the lesson,—no explanation or application of the truths it contained.

One Sabbath, this teacher was absent, and the superintendent, after much reasoning and entreaty persuaded Mr. E. to leave his own class for one Sabbath, and supply the place of the absent teacher. Mr. E. was aware that he was now with a class that had been accustomed to hear but little in regard to their salvation. Some might suppose that the direct, personal, faithful mode of address which he used to his own scholars, would offend these. Mr. E. might possibly have feared it himself; but he resolved that they should not go from a *Sabbath school* to the judgment seat of Christ, without at least one faithful, affectionate warning. And such he gave them, and with tears. Did he offend them?

The next Sabbath came, and such was the effect of these faithful instructions of Mr. E. upon the minds of the seven boys, that they all wished to unite with his class. So strong were their desires, that the superintendent and their teacher felt that they should be regarded. Mr. E. accordingly received these seven lads into his own class, increasing the number to fourteen promising youth.

This occurrence imparted a new zeal and earnestness to the labors of Mr. E., for the salvation of his interesting charge. From Sabbath to Sabbath their attention became more and more fixed, and a growing interest in the subject of personal religion more and more apparent. At length the tear of penitence and the anxious inquiry, "What must I do to be saved?" showed that the Spirit of God was indeed present.

In less than three months from the time these two classes were united, *six* of Mr. E.'s original scholars, and *all* the new ones, *thirteen* out of *fourteen*, were *hopefully converted!*

What would be the probable effect, should all the teachers

in our Sabbath schools begin, the next Sabbath,—after earnest prayer in the closet for divine assistance,—to address each of their scholars *personally*, with faithfulness and affection, yea with tears, on the subject of salvation? "Who can tell," *if they would do this faithfully*, "if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger," and restore unto us the influences of his Spirit, "that we perish not?" Let us do our whole duty in this matter, bring all the tithes into the storehouse, and prove the Lord of hosts, if he will not open unto us the windows of heaven, and pour out a blessing upon our Sabbath schools, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

WOMAN'S INDEBTEDNESS TO THE BIBLE.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 68.

Susan.—I am willing, Maria, to concede to all that you can say in favor of the Bible, and truly regret the lightness with which I spoke of it.

Maria.—I hope, my dear friend, you will feel an increasing interest in it, and study it with reference to your eternal destiny. Here is the letter which I promised you.

BANGKOK, (*Siam,*) 184—.

You wish me, dear Maria, to give you some correct idea of the people, among whom, in the providence of God, my lot is cast. Would that I *could* portray in living colors the true condition of a people without the Bible; that you might be led, with deeper gratitude, to adore the goodness of God in surrounding you with Bible influences, with Sabbaths and Sabbath schools, where have been instilled into your mind from early childhood, the pure principles of that holy religion, which the Son of God died to establish in the earth.

But come with me, and learn *something* of Siam. We will take a boat and go out upon the great thoroughfare of the

nation, the noble Méhnam, or in English, *Mother of Waters.* Upon the river, the prospect is pleasant. Numerous boats, freighted with the rich productions of a luxuriant soil, are bearing their treasures to the bazaars, or to the floating shops, which line either bank of the river. The entire front of these shops is open, displaying various stores of silks from China, printed cottons from England, and sheetings from your own Lowell, together with the productions and manufactures of this country. Stretching far away behind these floating warehouses, are the dwellings of the people, generally built of bamboo; now and then we see a substantial brick building, plastered on the outside, the residence of some wealthy Chinaman or Siamese nobleman. Those richly ornamented buildings which we so often pass, are wats, or temples of worship. We will visit one on the large canal just before us.

But first behold that scene: it will give you some idea of the love which the *heathen* bear to one another. See those little boats putting off in such haste, in every direction; one would think they were flying to the relief of some drowning person. But not so; the man who passed us just now with the great clumsy boat loaded with wood, has by some accident upset his boat, and his wood is afloat. As usual, it consists of small sticks, which can easily be gathered up.

"Ah, yes; and these people are hastening to assist him in picking it up before the current bears it away."

Not so fast, my friend; "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them," is not the golden rule with this people. They have no Bible, but act on principles more consistent with the unrestrained depravity of the natural heart. See, each one fills his little boat with the stranger's wood, and paddles home as fast as possible. But can he obtain no redress? They would laugh at such a question. The unfortunate man knows better than to seek it. He would have done the same himself. "It is the custom." Tum neum kong tai.

We will now visit the Wat. The Siamese spare no labor or expense in building and adorning their temples; in laying out the grounds and walks around them, and ornamenting them with the most beautiful flowering shrubs and trees. Many a poor soul fancies he has purchased a speedy release from the intermediate state of misery, to which he supposes all are doomed, by such meritorious acts.

There is generally one large central building, with a smaller one on each side. The doors are of ebony, richly gilded; some are of ebony, inlaid with pearl; and the floor of a small room in one of the king's wats, is covered with silver. Treasures of gold and siver, pearls and ebony are lavished on these buildings. Under one now in progress, further up the river, it is said twenty-five thousand ticals, or about fifteen thousand dollars, have been buried.

Let us go into one of the side buildings. It consists of one large room, at the upper end of which, upon a throne, a huge idol is seated *a la Turk*, with the figures of elephants, monkeys, &c., in the attitude of worship around him. Before the idol is a beautiful frame suited to accommodate the high priest when performing his devotions. In front of this a mat is spread upon the already matted floor, with a handsome pillow for the same personage to recline upon while attending to the Bali reading. The sides of the room are separated by pillars from the centre. In these alcoves, several priests are lounging on their mats, with their Bali books placed on frames before them; whether to accommodate the indolence of the readers, or their sacred regard for Bali, I am unable to say. Let us look at some of the smaller buildings around these temples. They serve as the abode of richly gilded idols, or as reading rooms, dormitories, &c., of the numerous priests and néns who crowd them. In a recess, on one side of a small pagoda, a gorgeous coffin reclines against the wall, from which protrudes a gilded foot, with toes of equal length. *Having fingers and toes of equal length is one of Boodh's*

excellencies. Before this foot, gilded images of priests, as large as life, are represented as bowing in worship, with the hands met and elevated before the face. In another recess is a long row of idols in golden robes; but we need go no further. At these temples, amid these gods, are the male children of the nation educated, and they are taught to regard with great veneration the priests who minister at these altars of sin. And what is the character of the priest, or his qualifications for his office of the priesthood? It is true that certain qualifications are required; but it is equally true, that *any* man of *any* character, may assume the priestly garb, and receive the homage of the people, laying it aside again at his option until he has done it three times; the third time he must be a priest for life. It is said that an African, who came here some time ago from Caffraria, was sentenced by the Prah Klang, an officer of high rank, to be whipped. The wily African heard of it, went to a wat, had his head shaved, and put on the sacred yellow robes. The next morning he presented himself before the Prah Klang, who was obliged to bow in homage before him, nor could he touch him while in that garb for past offences.

A law of the kingdom obliges every priest to go out in the morning and receive his food from the people, who will willingly dispense with the calls of hunger in themselves, to feed the priests, as they believe that by so doing they lay up a store of merit in heaven. Thus the indolent, and very often the vicious, are provided at the expense of a population famishing for the bread of life.

[The *special* application of the facts contained in this letter, to the subject of "woman's indebtedness to the Bible," must be deferred till the next number.]

Depend upon it, the hope of the church, both at home and abroad, lingers around our Sabbath schools. If these are well cultivated, a good return of precious fruit will be yielded to the glory and praise of our Lord Jesus Christ.—*Rev. J. Burns.*

THE

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THE SABBATH SCHOOL CONCERT.

CELEBRATION OF FAST DAY IN MASON STREET SABBATH SCHOOL, APRIL 2, 1846.

This well-ordered school assembled in the usual place of meeting at one o'clock, P. M. A bright assemblage it was. The apartment was thronged with parents and friends, rejoicing in the signs of lively interest around them; with teachers, smiling upon the fruits of their prayerful labors; and, above all, with eager children, whose animated looks lighted up the scene.

The worthy superintendent, according to his custom, ever devising means to keep up the spirit of the school, had prepared a beautifully printed scheme of exercises. The first page bore a handsome engraving of a heathen family carrying their offerings to the idol, either parent, and each of the children, to the very infant, having offerings in their hands. It could not fail to suggest many thoughts, comparing the different conditions of heathen and of Christian children, and the contrast between their respective prospects for eternity.

The exercises consisted in the reading of the Governor's proclamation calling for a Fast, singing, responsive readings

of selected Scriptures, appropriate to the day, prayer, recitations by the scholars, dialogues and remarks. All were heard with attention, and a very desirable state of feeling seemed to pervade the whole assembly.

The closing remarks, occupying nearly fifteen minutes, were to the following effect.

Dear Children and Friends,—Our excellent Governor, in his proclamation just read, expresses his hopes, that the pious custom of our fathers in observing this day, will not be neglected. But Fast days are not what they used to be. Our fathers held them much oftener than we do; sometimes, perhaps, when they would not; for scarcity of food occasionally *forced* the observance. Good John Cotton, at such times, spent five and six hours in praying and preaching without intermission. This was fasting "with a witness;" for the dinner hour would be long past, before the people returned to their homes.

Children, you have learned the catechism. That catechism was prepared by the Westminster Assembly of Divines. It is a lasting proof of their piety and wisdom. While they were preparing it, the earl of Essex marched his army out of London to fight for the liberty of the country. He asked the Assembly to keep a day of fasting, to pray for him and his army. There is a letter from a Scotch minister giving an account of the day which was kept. He says, it was the best day he had seen for a long time. They "spent from nine to five very graciously. After Dr. Twisse had begun with a brief prayer, Mr. Marshall prayed large two hours, most divinely, confessing our sins in a wonderful, pathetic, and prudent way: after, Mr. Arrowsmith preached an hour, then a psalm; thereafter, Mr. Vines prayed near two hours, and Mr. Palmer preached an hour, and Mr. Seaman prayed near two hours, then a psalm." Then Mr. Henderson made a short exhortation, and Dr. Twisse closed all with a short prayer and the benediction.

There was a fast day for you! One reason why the Puritans delighted in such long services might have been, their living in a day of persecution. Their opposers wanted to stop them from praying and preaching as they liked: hence it was natural for them, when they *could* have their own way, to make the most of the opportunity.

The Sabbath was spent much in the same way. They began in good season: and the services of public worship were long. The intermission was short; and then the afternoon services lasted two or three hours more. Then came *their* Sabbath schools; which were of the best kind, though very different from ours. They had a Sabbath school in every family. The father was the superintendent, and the mother was teacher, and all the children and servants were scholars. The first thing done was to "say the catechism." Then each one repeated all that could be remembered of the sermons preached that day. That one who could repeat the most, was the best of the lot. They looked upon this exercise as of great importance to fix the instructions of the pulpit on the mind. What came in at one ear, had to stay some time in the head before it went out at the other ear: and much of it would not go out at all. To help them in this exercise, they took notes of the sermon. Each one, old and young, was furnished with a blank book; and as they all wrote after the minister, they looked like a congregation of "reporters," reporting with all their might for the morning papers. Many of these old note-books are found lying in dusty garrets.

The only part of the good old custom which has come down to our times, is the practice of "bringing home the text:" and it is to be feared that even this is going quite out of use. Every one ought to carry home at least the text, which is the fountain-head and best part of the sermon. But too many children and older persons are like the dog, whose master took him along to church. The dog was not allowed

to run up and down the aisles, to the annoyance of the congregation, but was obliged to lie down on a little mat at his master's feet, where he slept as sound as any of the hearers. At last the master died, and the pew was sold to another owner. But the dog had been so well trained, that as soon as the second bell began to toll on Sabbath morning, he trotted off to meeting, and scratched at the pew-door till it was opened for him. The new owner was a good-natured man, and always allowed the dog, as long as he lived to claim it, to occupy his accustomed place. But he said, "he did n't see as it did the poor fellow any good, for he never carried the text home!" This story is almost too much of a "tit-bit" for a fast day: but we tell it for your good. We fear that too many of the children are no wiser than the poor old dog. It is to be hoped, that you will all "stick to the text." It is a good habit, both for preachers and hearers.

Our Sabbath schools have this one advantage over those of our forefathers, that they gather in the children of numerous families, which would have no such school at home as we have described. Such families, where there is no prayer, and no catechising, are much more numerous than they used to be. It is a great mercy that this provision is made for them.

Dear children, never forget what all these things are meant for. They are to help you to get to heaven. Do you not wish to go there? Have you no dear friends there, waiting for you? Do you not wish to meet them once more, and be happy with them for ever? Some of you have a father gone there; and some a mother; and some a dear little brother or sister. Oh that you may all be pilgrims to the blessed city where they live. They wait for you to join them there. They are all ready to sing the last strains of that beautiful song in which we united just now;—

"Lift up your heads, ye golden gates,
And let the little travelers in."

M.

ELLEN NEWPORT.

A SKETCH FROM LIFE.

CONCLUDED FROM PAGE 103.

What a representation was this scene of the great principle of God's government. As our Father, he commands us to give to him *the heart.* We do not obey,—still he continues his gentle entreaties,—our waywardness and selfishness form a barrier to our obedience,—but at length, by the omnipotence of that heavenly principle,—love,—we are insensibly and irresistibly drawn to him, and we then rejoice to yield, where once we so proudly resisted. Who that truly loves the Saviour, can fail to look back gratefully on the hour when, with humility and sweet submission, they joyfully cast themselves at his feet, to be forgiven and welcomed with all a Father's kindness, to the richest his mansions can yield.

O, how much dearer doth God become to the penitent heart for his exceeding forbearance! There is a world of power in those words, "Thy *gentleness* hath made me great," and the experience of some hearts can bear glad testimony to its truth. What a nobility of spirit is often born of the victory over our intensest struggles against duty and principle. What eras do such moments become in our mental history, signal-stations along life's highway, from which, with telegraphic swiftness, is conveyed along the magic wires of memory, a single word of sufficient power to infuse strength into a wavering heart. They may lie far back in dim distance of childhood, but yet exerting a wonderful influence to manhood's latest day.

There are often circumstances in more advanced life, where the habitual or incidental subjugation of the will has a direct influence on the formation of Christian character. Those who are, from youth, under the dominion of strong and unsubdued passions, who are rebellious under the authority of an earth-

ly parent, find it a Herculean task in after years, when with an aroused conscience, they hear God's imperative summons, to give unto him those affections where the world has hitherto borne sway. While they who are accustomed to render a cheerful, ready obedience to every request of those who are training them for eternity, or in the event of insubordination, are with faithful love convinced of their error, with decision made to acknowledge it, are in the surest state of preparation to become the subjects of him, who, when on earth, distinctly recognized parental authority, and was in all things obedient to it.

I recollect an instance related to me by a friend of mine, whose home-education had been of this latter character. He had one day offended a lady, by the violation of some point of etiquette, and in which he was decidedly blameable; he became instantly sensible of his error, as he perceived he had wounded her feelings very much, and she directly left his presence. He was too proud to acknowledge his fault, and moreover asserted that he never would do so, to those who had witnessed his deviation from the rules of politeness. Having clothed himself in the panoply of such a resolution, he felt strong and secure that he should maintain his own ground.

Thrown frequently into the society of his friend,—for a friend she truly was,—there was never any allusion made to this occurrence. Her manner continued invariably kind and gentle, as she wished to convince him of his fault by other than harsh means, or the slightest shade of reproof, which is so galling to a proud spirit. She really respected him, and appreciated fully the many admirable traits of his character; but the fault in question had been so frequently repeated, had become almost a habit, that suddenly it roused her to a manifestation of her displeasure, which, though very quiet, was fully comprehended by him. She felt more sad that he should offend, than that she should be the sufferer,—

and all her desire was that he should become sensible of his own accord that he had done wrong, and acknowledge it; that he had not forfeited her respect was sufficiently evident from her manner.

She understood human nature, and rightly judged the event. Not many days elapsed before the really noble-minded young man wrote a note, expressive of his sorrow at having forgotten what was due to her as a lady, to himself as a gentleman, in the incident alluded to,—and requested her forgiveness for his offence, thanking her most earnestly for the forbearance she had manifested under the provocation, for her gentleness and kindness of manner, and respect for his feelings,—and added, that he could not feel satisfied, until he had made acknowledgment of his fault, and received her full pardon for it. He had endured a severe struggle between his pride and his sense of duty, but her kindness had triumphed and his pride yielded.

Was he not worthy infinitely more respect for thus acting so noble a part,—and did he not secure far more than he could lose by such a course?

Not many weeks subsequent to that circumstance, that young man became a decided, steadfast Christian; heart, mind, soul, all were renovated,

"And passions on God's altar laid."

In conversing with a friend upon his change of character, he made distinct allusion to the incident just related, and said, with much feeling, "how can I estimate the amount of influence which the subduing of my pride, in that instance, had with the submission of my will to God. I feel that the one aided the other."

Christian parent! I write for you, that you may be encouraged always *to do your duty* by your children,—remembering your victory is sure, if you lean upon an arm stronger than your own, and your reward is certain, both here and

hereafter. You know not how widely the influence of one hour of discipline may radiate, nor how many hearts, beside that of your child, may be benefited by your steadfast, Christian course, in acting out the principle of *securing obedience and submission through gentleness and firmness united.* They are weapons before which the proudest nature, the most obstinate, rebellious temper, will finally yield, if, at the same time, your own spirit be prayerful.

Unconverted parent! I write for you,—for you unto whom God has committed the charge of immortal minds, and of your faithfulness ye shall be judged. The Bible is in your hand,—it reveals to you the character of your heavenly Father, and his principles of government. Love him,—and govern your children by his precepts,—not in the hasty impulses of passion, but in quietness and confidence, in God's strength, will you find yours, and your aid. Thus govern, and your children will bless you while eternity endures.

Child! I write to you. Are you one accustomed to comply with the requirements of your parents,—to show a deference to their opinion,—to study their pleasure, and seek its gratification,—to discover that in no way can you make your home so full of sunlight as by docility and obedience? If so, you are prepared to appreciate the character of a parent, who could thus mould your character,—you are preparing, in future days, to become the companion of your parents,—and by your filial devotion to show forth your gratitude for their care, their love, their discipline.

Are you one accustomed to rule,—to set at nought the commands of your parents, and trample on their authority,—forgetting the debt you owe them, the contempt you cast on God's law by your disobedience? Tremble for every such victory,—tremble for the inauspicious dawning of such power. It brings sorrow and bitterness to your own heart, and a darkness over your home, where not all the gleaming of India's diamonds could ever create a light like that you have

extinguished. Tremble for your own gloomy, wretched future, when a course of crime may be the result of your present insubordination, or your own children may cause you to eat the bread of anguish and drink the waters of bitterness you once offered to those God commanded you to honor.

M. R. T.

A PLAN TO AID IN HIDING THE WORD OF GOD IN THE HEART.

We hide the word of God in our heart when we lay it up in our memory, where we can readily find it. To do this, we need to repeat the words of Scripture frequently to ourselves. If we repeated them to others, and then were assisted by them only as far as we needed it, we might thus accomplish our object better than by taking the Bible and looking at the passage we recite, whenever we are stopped. One useful way, therefore, of treasuring the words of Scripture in our memory is, to select some of the most suitable portions of God's word, and then write on a little pocket-book, the words beginning each verse. Take for example the first Psalm,—a very beautiful, appropriate Psalm,—and write the first words of each verse thus:—"Psalm 1: Blessed—man; 2, But—delight; 3, And he—a tree; 4, The ungodly; 5, Therefore—ungodly; 6, For—L." If the Psalm is committed to memory, the scholar has these minutes in his pocket-book; and when he has a leisure moment, when he is walking, or working with his hands, or waiting some appointment, he takes the opportunity to repeat a small portion of the word of God; and he says to himself some part of the first Psalm; but it may be that he overlooks one verse, or his memory fails, or he has not time for the mental effort of recalling what is really laid away in the memory, but cannot be at once recollected. He has recourse, therefore, to his pocket-

book; and now he has readily before him the first Psalm, more full of meaning, more precious, more connected, and more perfect than it ever seemed to be while he was reading it with the book open before him. A *perfect* command of some select portions of God's word, so that they can be readily repeated to ourselves in some solitary wakeful hours of night, may be an inestimable advantage to us. Some words of Scripture may then open to our mind with marvellous beauty, like the night-blooming Cereus. To derive the most profit from words of Scripture hid in our hearts, they should be perfectly familiar, so that there will be no effort in repeating them in their true connection. Then it will sometimes greatly surprise us that there is so much in a few words of God; and that we can repeat them so many times, with continued interest and profit; and that we can apply them so properly on so many occasions. A single small vein of this sacred ore is precious beyond calculation. Gold itself may wear out by use, or it perishes, though tried by fire; but this word neither perishes nor fails. F. C.

TEACHING CHILDREN TO REMEMBER THE HEATHEN.

Next to their first duty of love to God,—said the Rev. Mr. B., in a report on Foreign Missions,—let your children be imbued with missionary ideas. Tell them of the degradation of heathen children, and of their sufferings from the hands of their parents. And when, at the morning hour, or in the twilight of the evening, they clasp a mother's knees, and learn to lisp the first accents of prayer, teach them to pray for the children whose parents know not God. And if God hear your prayer, and bless your efforts for their conversion, teach them to regard the *conversion of the world* as the noblest object to which their days can be devoted.

A PASTOR AND HIS SABBATH SCHOOL.

[Accompanying the report of the Union Sabbath School, Worcester, is the following note by the pastor:]

"I can only say that I regard our Sabbath school as a very efficient auxiliary to the prosperity of the church. One of the most interesting scenes that I witness during the year, is our Sabbath school, when the classes are all engaged in recitation. We have a good corps of teachers. The Sabbath school concert of prayer is usually a good meeting. From the written reports of the teachers, I generally select a number of texts and preach short sermons upon them. In one I find a particular thought of interest, in another some different thought, and so, in the course of the evening, I am enabled to touch upon many particulars of great interest to teachers and pupils. Our school, on the whole, is as flourishing as it ever has been, and we are hoping and praying, that, during the present year, it may be a scene for the rich displays of God's grace."

THE CHURCH AND THE SABBATH SCHOOL.

The superintendent of the Sabbath school in North Ashburnham, says: "Our plan of managing our Sabbath school works thus far, almost three years, admirably. We can confidently recommend it. The school is wholly under the control of the church, and every thing relating to it worthy of record, is entered on the church book by the clerk, and becomes a part of the church records. At the annual meeting the church chooses a committee of three, called 'The Committee of Supervision,'—the chairman to be superintendent, and in his absence the second to act as such, and so on. In this way the church is made to feel interested; and this we think, is an object of great importance."

WOMAN'S INDEBTEDNESS TO THE BIBLE.

CONCLUDED FROM PAGE 120.

We have glanced at the gorgeous temples, gilded idols, and pampered priests of the Siamese; let us look at the people. What influence does their religion exert upon their moral, social and domestic relations? Ah! "justice is afar off, for truth is fallen in the streets and equity cannot enter." From the king to the beggar, there are none in whose integrity you can confide. The rich hope that building wats and multiplying idols, will cancel all their deeds of darkness and eventually procure them a high seat in heaven. The poor seek to conciliate the favor of gods and demons by various offerings to the priests, at the temples, or otherwise. The natural phenomena of the heavens, which the Christian contemplates with such sublime delight and joyful confidence in God, are here sources of superstitious terror. Signs and omens are gravely consulted, as if the fate of a nation depended on them.

All are slaves, in bondage to fear. Man has little or no confidence in man. To circumvent and defraud each other is an object of their highest ambition, and to escape detection, which ensures retaliation, their chief care.

Woman is a slave. From the palace to the bamboo hut, her condition is a degraded one. She can seldom read; to intellectual culture or refinement she is a stranger. If the wife of a prince or nobleman, she is never permitted to eat with her lord, or even to *stand* in his presence, but crouches, or kneels like the most abject slave. Among the lower classes, though more nearly on terms of equality with the other sex, and often the purse-bearer and business transacter of the family, she may be separated from her children and sold by her husband, like the buffalo with which he cultivates his rice fields, to pay the debts which he has contracted by gambling.

But how is it with the poor idolater when death approaches? Oh, how dark, how uncertain is all before him then! He feels that he needs another Saviour than good works, but tries to calm his agitated spirit with the hope that when he has suffered in the various hells of Boodhism, he will gain admittance to an inferior heaven, and then rise according to his merit, till he reaches the perfection of bliss, which consists in a state of perfect passiveness, nearly equivalent to annihilation.

My dear Maria, what has made us to differ? Contrast the life of the Christian, the glorious hopes which gild his pathway to the tomb, and enable him to triumph over death, with the life and death of even the best of heathen. Can we prize too highly the precious Bible? Can we study it too diligently, or labor too earnestly to have the minds of all under our influence thoroughly imbued with its heavenly principles? How does the Sabbath school rise in importance. There, my friend, is a choice field of labor. May you have grace to be a faithful Sabbath school teacher.

Yours truly, F.

A TEACHER'S EXPERIENCE.

BIBLE CLASSES,—NEWCOMB'S QUESTIONS ON ROMANS.

I HAVE just received the "Visiter," for the last three months, and the reading of two or three articles has awakened some thoughts of the past which may be of interest to others beside myself. Should you think there are any such among your readers, they are at your disposal.

One of the articles referred to is headed, "Revival in a Bible Class." There are several points of interest in that article. First,—Every impenitent member of the class,—which consisted of thirty,—was hopefully converted. Second,—The class used "Newcomb's Questions on Romans,"

published by the Mass. S. S. Society, which appears to have been a most important auxiliary in securing the blessed result. The third point was, That the class spent one evening a week, for *two years*, in going through this book. And in the fourth place, The members have ever since felt a special interest in that portion of the word of God.

These facts brought up in review some of the most delightful scenes in my own experience. Before me lies a copy of Newcomb on Romans, which I purchased at your Depository in 1836. I find on the fly leaf, the following memoranda, —"Commenced the study of Romans with the aid of this question book, in 1836, with a class of seven young ladies, in the Bennett St. Sabbath School (Salem Church), Boston.

"April 1, 1838, commenced another Bible class, consisting of twelve young gentlemen, in the Salem Church Vestry, using this question book on Romans. My young ladies' class now numbers *fifty*, and has been twice divided on account of its being too large.

"April 21, 1839. This day commenced a Bible class of young ladies, in Louisville, Ky., connected with Mr. Humphrey's congregation, using this question book in studying Romans.

"1841; commenced the study of Romans with a large class of both sexes, in the Sixth Presbyterian Church, Cincinnati, Ohio, using this question book.

"May, 1843. Commenced a Bible class of young ladies in the Tabernacle Church, Cincinnati. We study Romans, and use this question book as our aid."

A few facts respecting the first class in Bennett St. Sabbath School, Boston. And first, the class increased to such an extent that, after being twice divided, to keep it at about forty, it numbered at least *seventy* in regular attendance,—finding it detrimental to divide. This increase was almost entirely from without the Sabbath school, and secured by the members themselves,—such was their interest. They were most of them nearly of an age,—about eighteen. Second—

there was a constant *revival of God's work* in the class,—both among the Christians and the impenitent. At one time, for weeks in succession, there was some member hopefully converted. *Nineteen* from this class united with the Salem St. Church, on one communion season. Much of the time there was no special interest in the church. The state of piety and religious interest in the class, was often marked in its influence on the church. I do not now recollect the whole number converted in the class while under my care,—I think about forty. But on a visit to Boston last summer, after an absence of seven years, I met *thirty* of the class at one time in a social circle, and from them and other particular inquiries, I could learn of only two that had ever been regular members of the class, while I had charge of it; that had not made a public profession of their faith in Christ, and that but one of their entire number had been known to walk unworthy of their church relations.

The meeting was, of course, one of thrilling interest, awakening the most tender and refreshing associations, and never to be forgotten. A remembrancer of great value was unexpectedly presented to their old teacher, which, added to repeated ones, in former times, greatly cheers and encourages his heart, while doing the work of a pioneer minister in this great city of the West. It is to the influence and assistance of that class, under God, that I am now in the ministry.

Another fact. We held two lessons on the Sabbath for recitation and a portion of the time spent one evening a week in devotional exercises, when some member, designated on the previous Sabbath, was the subject of prayer. Yet we spent *two and a half years* on the first eight chapters, and the interest in the lessons never decreased.

I will add but another. The class have always manifested a special interest in the Epistle to the Romans, and particularly when a text is announced from it. Their interest in each other, in Bible class instruction, and in the prosperity

of Zion, seems to be above the common standard, although some of them may be found heads of families on the prairies of the far West, and in the waste places of Maine.

I have only room to say, Let not your question book on Romans fall into disuse: and do all you can to encourage Bible classes. J. C. W.

KINDNESS.

This will always do good. It makes others happy—and that is doing good. It prompts us to seek to benefit others—and that is doing good. It makes others gentle and benignant—and that is doing good.

Let it be remembered also, that it is by the temper, and by the spirit that we manifest, that the world forms its opinions of the nature of religion. It is not by great deeds in trying circumstances that men will judge of the nature of the gospel. The world at large cares little how Ignatius and Polycarp felt, or how they died. Perhaps the mass around you never heard their names. They are little impressed by the virtues which Latimer, and Ridley, and Cranmer evinced at the stake. But that unbelieving husband cares much for the gentle and kind spirit of the wife—for all his happiness depends on it; that brother is interested much in the conversation and the spirit of his sister—for he daily observes her temper, and is forming his views of religion from what he sees in her; that child is constantly marking the temper of the father and the mother, and is forming his views of religion, not so much from what he hears in the pulpit, or in the Sabbath school, as from the temper which you evince from one day to another. In these fields—humble though they may seem, and little as they appear to furnish a theatre for the display of eminent virtues—your usefulness lies. There, with the "gentleness" that was in Christ, you cannot but be useful; and exhibiting such a spirit, you will not live in vain.—*Barnes.*

THE GREAT DECEIVER.

CONCLUDED FROM PAGE 115.

If, however, under the blazing light of the Bible, man is driven from the refuge of self-esteem, the resources of his heart are by no means exhausted. If he feel the necessity of conciliating the power of God by penitence; then his mind is fruitful in vain devices to enlarge "the strait gate" and widen "the narrow way." Hence the false views of repentance so many cherish. With some it is a mere change of external conduct, unaccompanied by any radical change of the heart; with others it consists in a few tears for past sins, and a few transitory feelings of sorrow, which do not result in any decided improvement of the life and conversation. Under a like spell of self-deception many seek to win the favor of God, by ways and means, foreign alike to his character and their own. The deluded idolater multiplies sacrifices and offerings; the superstitious devotee wastes his life in self-inflicted penances, fasting and prayers. These indeed are the grosser forms of delusion, and find a place only in ages of darkness, or among a people sunk in ignorance. For more intelligent minds the heart frames more subtle devices. With them religion consists in a decent external form; the outside of the cup is cleansed, but its inward pollution remains. They honor the rites and observances of religion; they come to the sanctuary, they read the Bible, they bend the knee in prayer, they open the lips to praise, they give alms to the needy, but cherish not the spirit of faith, humility and penitence, that alone can hallow worship in the sight of God. As Israel of old, "they honor God with their lips, while their heart is far from him." Another class are deceived by adopting false evidences of conversion. They neglect self-examination, or shrink from the searching standard of the Bible, and are contented to measure themselves

with others, and thus form a false estimate of their character in the sight of God. This delusion is generally practised by leading to forgetfulness of the principle that "without holiness no man shall see the Lord;" and thus profession is made to answer for practice, and the having a name to live, for the life itself. It is a most deadly snare, the most beguiling of all the wiles of a deceitful heart. It throws off from religion its crosses and self-denial, while it retains its promises and hopes. Thus the yoke is made easy and the burden light;

"Easy, indeed, it were to reach
A mansion in the courts above,
If swelling words and fluent speech,
Might serve instead of faith and love.

But none shall gain the blissful place,
Or God's unclouded glory see,
Who *talks* of free and sovereign grace,
Unless that grace has made *him* free."

Those ensnared by this wile usually rest easy. The dreams of other deceived souls are occasionally disturbed, an arrow from the quiver of the Almighty may pierce them, but they who are cherishing false evidences of conversion, too generally rest satisfied with the foundations of their hopes, and live and die in fatal security. The light that is in them is darkness, and how great must be that darkness. Upon it the light of revelation flashes, but only to reveal its depth of gloom; and scarcely a solitary beam reaches the soul thus enveloped in false and fatal confidence.

Other forms of self-deception might be noticed, but my limits do not admit. One, however, is so common, it must receive a passing remark. It is the promise or resolution of future amendment. Procrastination lulled the startled conscience of Felix to deeper slumber, and thousands now sleep quietly under the same opiate. It is a flattering delusion. It does not place the sinner in direct opposition to God—but he admits his claim, and acknowledges the necessity and ob-

ligation of repentance. He even promises to repent and only waits a convenient season. It is a delusion that flattered him yesterday; it flatters him to-day; to-morrow its syren tongue will have lost none of its sweetness. Time indeed is flying, but he "takes no note of time;" the evil days are yet future; and there is time enough yet. Thus,

"He resolves, and re-resolves, and dies the same."

From this view of the vain imaginations of the heart, by which man is blinded to the character of God, and his own character, and thus beguiled into error, and seduced from the path of salvation, how true appear the strong declarations of Scripture—"the heart is deceitful above all things—who can know it?" "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool." How needful and timely the caution, "To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts."

"Man's wisdom is to seek his strength,
His strength in God alone;
And even an angel would be weak
Who trusted in his own." E. F. C.

THE GOOD STEP-MOTHER.

The step-mother has had an ill name with many from ancient poets down to modern ones. But there were bad mothers, as well as bad step-mothers, in the heathen families of Greece and Rome. The gospel has sanctified in a manner the families under its influence; and there are thus better husbands and wives; better parents and children; and better fathers-in-law, and mothers-in-law. I would say something now of the good step-mother, of her *difficulties*, of her *usefulness* and of her *reward*.

The good step-mother has her *difficulties*. The very name of step-mother is a difficulty. It suggests to the children not so much what they have gained in having a mother, instead

of having none; but what they have lost in losing their own mother. What though the mother-in-law is decidedly superior to the mother that is lost; the children are ignorant of this; and even if they know it, there is a natural affection for an own mother, which they cannot feel for another, however kind and faithful. In domestic life, in the best regulated and most happy and Christian families, there are severe trials to be endured. A very intelligent and pious wife of a preacher told me of the feelings of their oldest daughter of about sixteen years of age. She was amiable, sensible, and well educated for her years; but she could not dress so well as the young ladies, with whom she would naturally associate, and she must submit to some restraints, from which they were free. Had this kind parent been a mother-in-law, the daughter would have been tempted to attribute her trials to her harshness and want of affection. But the step-mother fears to use too much authority and restraint, and to put too much on the children under her care; and her indulgence nourishes that pride, wilfulness and love of ease which are natural to the depraved heart; and consequently, her difficulties are greatly increased. She toils for these children, without the confidence the own mother feels that she shall give satisfaction, be rewarded by the natural affection of her children, be nursed by them in her declining years, and have from neighbors the commendation of being a kind and faithful mother.

Let us now look at the step-mother's *usefulness*. If a woman should take up her residence in a family bereaved of a mother, and should, without compensation, spend her life in labors for that family, she would be thought a remarkable example of charity. But the good step-mother does something like this. It is not her fault that the children have been deprived of their own mother. God in his wisdom and justice has seen fit to bereave them. How much the family needs a new head, for the honor, the comfort, the interest, and the spiritual welfare of all the household, they cannot under-

stand. The good step-mother takes the important and difficult place that God has made empty. It is a place from which she cannot retreat, when she has once entered it—she has taken it for life. If the family have property and can hire help, yet there must be a laborious and anxious oversight of the household. There must be many things done which hired help cannot do ; and, how much is to be done, good mothers alone know ; though discerning fathers may have some understanding of the subject. But perhaps the family have no great income ; and the step-mother must do the work of the household herself. For the children then, with her own hands she cooks, and scours ; she washes, irons, and mends ; she makes, alters and adjusts their clothes. She attends them when sick, watches by them for many a weary hour of night. And she does this when she knows that her kindness cannot be received and appreciated as an own mother's would be. She knows that for all this she will have no reward from them ; that she will not be at home in their hearts or houses. If she is then a good step-mother, she acts with eminent disinterestedness. The trials that naturally fret the spirit do by God's grace sanctify her ; they are like the scouring dust with which brass is polished, or which brightens the lustre of gold. She cannot do all the good she would ; for the hearts she would mould aright are not yielding enough ; but neither are they yielding enough to own parents, as they know by painful experience.

But let us look at the *reward* of the good step-mother. Whatever the world may say, and however her management may be appreciated, she has an inward consciousness of having endeavored to do her duty. This is her rejoicing. In many cases, perhaps in most, she secures the esteem of those to whom she supplies a mother's place ; and in some instances she is greatly loved, and kindly cared for. She provides for her old age by her prudence and toils ; for it is a fact, to be acknowledged with thankfulness to God, that commonly,

they who in the vigor of their days lead a life of industry and economy, kindness and uprightness, are comfortably provided for in their years of infirmity, without being indebted to private or public charity. But the greatest reward of the good step-mother is hereafter. Poor, indeed, would be our reward for our toils and trials on earth, if the only reward we received were enjoyed in a world so much clouded as this is by sin and sorrow. If, the less we are rewarded on earth, the more we are rewarded through grace and faith in heaven, then the good step-mother may be richly blessed hereafter in that grace which she has exercised in her course of difficulty and usefulness. Death is commissioned to make sad sunderings in families; and wounds are made which, though bound up, are not wholly healed. We should be most humbly and heartily thankful to God, that we are not left wholly desolate; and we may submit with entire resignation to his holy will, in all those domestic trials, great and small, by which he says to us, "Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest."

I do not know to whom this article may be most useful. It may meet with the sympathies of step-mothers. There are hearts that feel for them. Their office is a very important one; and if its difficulties and duties are great, so its usefulness and its reward are great. It is a situation in which the Christian graces may eminently have their exercise, and in which consequently God may be specially enjoyed. Some mothers are conscious of being fretful, selfish and unhappy. Others are conscious of aiming to act aright; and though they may not give satisfaction to others, they trust that they have the approbation of God, and they feel a confidence that they will in some manner enjoy his blessing. This article may again attract the notice of some who have a mother-in-law. These, if young, will not know how much labor is performed for them—how much care is taken of them—and how little reward is received by those who do this labor and take this care. But possibly the thought of being indebted to one

whom they do not love as an own mother, may be a very disagreeable thought. The indebtedness, however, cannot be avoided, and the only thing that can be done is to discharge the indebtedness by all possible kindness, respect and labors. The loss of own parents is one to which children are liable. If this loss is suffered, though it be afterward only in part made up, there is occasion for lively gratitude to God.

This article again may excite the attention of the general reader as treating on a subject not often discussed. There is well known to be a difference between natural parents, and those who take the parent's place. It seems to be necessary that the difficulties, the services, and the rewards of the mother-in-law especially should be understood; and that the temptations and duties of children should be understood; that this relation may be a more holy one to all parties, that the families in which death has made a breach, and which have been re-constructed, may be as happy, as is to be expected in a world ruined by sin.

While we impartially look at the difficulties which some families encounter, we are by no means to indulge the apprehension, that the relation of step-father or step-mother will, usually cause unhappiness. Such an apprehension would greatly tend to cause the very unhappiness that was apprehended. If our views of mankind and of human life were more scriptural, our expectations from this world would be more moderate, we should be better prepared for its trials and its duties, and we should therefore be more happy. ISAAC.

Your avocation is connected with eternal things, it should, therefore, be highly estimated, and its duties faithfully discharged. I want you to feel that you are filling a higher, and much more important situation, as Sabbath school teachers, in helping your scholars in their way to heaven, than you would be, if, dressed in scarlet and gold, you were the cupbearers of a king. EPHRAIM HOLDING.

"WE HAVE TOILED ALL NIGHT AND TAKEN NOTHING."

Accompanying the report of the Sabbath School, in Templeton, the pastor says: "'We have toiled all night and have taken nothing.' This is the language which we are compelled to adopt in regard to our Sabbath school. The teachers have met their classes and communicated instructions without seeing the precious fruit of their labors. The school has frequently been addressed in stirring and solemn appeals, and good attention has been given to these addresses and to the lessons. I have generally stopped at the school till it was opened, and have often made remarks, sometimes to teachers, sometimes to children, and sometimes to professing Christians. The Sabbath school concert has been sustained, and has generally been a well attended and solemn meeting. Still we are left to ask, *Who hath believed our report and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?* Nevertheless we must say, *Thou Lord art just in all thou hast brought upon us,* in the barrenness of the Sabbath school and of the church, *for we have sinned.*

We still hope to see happy results yet, from the labors that have been bestowed upon the Sabbath school."

LABORS FOR DESTITUTE CHILDREN.

The Rev. Mr Arnot, of the Free Church, Glasgow, in an address before the gratuitous Sabbath school teachers, of Montreal, Lower Canada, says:

"*Destitute* children should be the especial objects of your care. In the Sabbath schools that I have seen here, the children are too well dressed. You must go into the lanes, and bring those who need instruction most. Your work will never be in the way of being well done, until you have portioned the city into districts, and made sure that every child has had the offer of Sabbath school teaching. The salt should be most assiduously applied to those parts of the body politic, which seem most ready to run into corruption."

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THE SABBATH SCHOOL CONCERT.

THE PASTOR'S FUNERAL.

[The following article from the pen of Rev. John Todd, D. D., we find published in the London "Sunday School Teachers' Magazine," for April. If read at the concert, it will interest all present, from the *pastor* to the smallest *lamb* of his flock.]

THERE are many interesting reflections attending the burial of a useful man. Thoughtless as men are on the subject of death, when they come to stand round the lifeless clay of a beloved friend or acquaintance, they then feel it to be a solemn event. And perhaps they then resolve that they will now prepare for that solemn moment; while too often the sods which cover the friend, bury also their resolutions. It is at any time interesting to follow a good man to his grave, but especially a good minister; I can well remember the impression such an occasion made upon my mind.

It was at the funeral of an aged country minister, who for half a century had been found faithful at his post, with his loins girded and his lamp ever trimmed. Since his

settlement, a new generation had become matured; and, among the mourning assembly, there were but few gray heads who had not sat under his instructions. Hence his people looked up to him, not only as to a shepherd to lead them to the fold of his Master, but also with the affection of children. For more than fifty years had he broken to his people the bread of life, and though by reason of age he must ere long fall asleep, yet I know not, when the event happened, that they shed one tear the less for its having been expected. I silently followed the mournful procession, as they conveyed the remains of their beloved minister to the grave. It afforded a melancholy pleasure to see a goodly number of neighboring ministers paying their last respects to their departed brother,—a weeping church and a mourning congregation, all evincing, by expressive silence, how much they felt. Here, too, were seen a numerous class of poor, who for a long time had looked up to their pastor for temporal as well as spiritual food, expressing their grief in audible sobbings.

But amid this sorrowing train, my attention was peculiarly attracted by the appearance of the younger part of the congregation. These were about one hundred children, who composed the Sabbath school of the village. This number was about equally divided between the two sexes. They walked in front of the procession, the girls on the right and the boys on the left, each wearing some humble though sincere badge of mourning. By the time they had arrived at the grave-yard, they had revived in their minds all the condescensions and kindnesses of their beloved pastor, which, perhaps, no other occasion could have recalled to remembrance, and their little bosoms were filled with sorrow at the sight of the grave. They opened to the right and left, and as the venerable corpse passed between them, they showed their feelings in all the simplicity of children. The boys took their hats from their heads, and would now and

then be seen wiping a tear with the corner of their jackets, while every little girl covered her face with her little white handkerchief, and sobbed as if losing her last earthly friend.

They were standing around the grave, and as the speaker addressed the audience on this solemn occasion, all were as silent as a forest when not a breath of wind breaks its stillness; but when the minister addressed the children particularly, their sorrows found vent through their almost bursting hearts. Nor did I wonder. They were lambs, and their shepherd was no more. They could not recall to mind when their parents first took them by the hand and led them to the house of God. They could not remember when their minister had often prayed for them while they were yet infants. But they could remember the time when he collected and arranged them systematically into a Sabbath school. Since the first institution of their school, they had assembled regularly every Sabbath; and every Sabbath, too, had their faces been brightened by meeting their good pastor and their hearts were bound to his by a thousand little ties unknown to many ministers. They were as usual, arranged in classes under proper instructors. Every Sabbath they recited to their teachers their portions of Scripture, of hymns, and of catechism. After the recitations were over, the good pastor, would go round to each class in company with its teacher, and examine by the class-paper the recitations and conduct of each individual. He needed not to distribute tickets to excite emulation, for every scholar thought himself amply rewarded for a week's hard study, if on the Sabbath he could receive a smile of approbation from his minister,—and peradventure he would also sometimes lay his aged hand on his flaxen hair, and commend him for diligence and good behaviour. The scholar who had failed to recite, or whose behaviour was improper, received but a slight rebuke from the good old man, together with a

look of pity and sorrow, which seldom failed to bring tears, —a punishment sufficiently severe. After passing through the school in this manner, the minister would say a few words as to the general conduct and appearance of the school. He would then read a suitable hymn, which was sung by those parents who were present, together with the children. And often would the good man weep for joy, when he sat and heard their little voices causing the church to reverberate with untuned notes of infant praise; and he would then lift up his tremulous voice in prayer for the lambs before him, while they knelt, and mingled their aspirations with those of threescore and ten. A delightful tie was thus created between church and school. The children felt that their privileges were great because the man of God was so frequently in their midst; the teachers felt that, however discouraging their prospects might occasionally be, there was one heart that never grew cold; and the church felt that she must go with her leader, and gather her sympathies around the vineyard of the Lord.

Once in every three months this Sabbath school was examined, and the day was always longed for by the scholars before it arrived, for it was to them a holiday. They then assembled with their teachers, and in the presence of their parents and the whole congregation, were examined in the studies of the preceding quarter. Their names were then individually called over, and as each arose to answer, his recitations were mentioned over, and his general conduct commended or blamed, as need be, before the whole assembly. The good clergyman then preached a sermon, usually known by the name of "the children's sermon," as it was always adapted to their situation and understandings. These quarterly meetings were usually highly gratifying to both parents and children, and not a little to the teachers; and they were always closed with singing, by the children, that beautiful little hymn beginning,—

"Once did the blessed Saviour say,
Let little children come—"

Thus, in brief, was conducted the best Sabbath school I ever knew. And of these scenes were the children thinking when the earth was thrown into the grave upon their pastor, and their feelings were too big to be repressed.

I stayed by the grave, and beheld this mourning school as they ascended the little hill which separated their homes from the grave-yard, and even as they vanished from my sight, I thought I heard their sobbings still; and I could not but reflect, that while many of our ministers consider Sabbath schools as beneath their care, the good old man who was stretched before me in everlasting rest, might have many of these dear little children as jewels in the crown of glory, which he will wear in that great day of account.

THE TEACHER'S TRUST.

A Sabbath school teacher! How much of honor, how much of privilege, is implied in that single sentence. It is a trust which angels might covet, and yet how little do teachers realize the true character of their station and the weighty responsibility which it involves! To the monarchs of earth it is left, humanly speaking, to wield the destinies of nations, but they all shall pass away together and mingle with their native dust. To the Sabbath school teacher is given the moulding of individual minds which shall exist when the earth itself shall melt away and be dissolved. Every word uttered, every emotion exhibited, shall live with its influence, when eternity to come shall have

joined eternity past, and teacher and pupil have commenced their interminable existence. Our Sabbath suns are hastily declining, and perhaps the next may be our last, and a great work is yet to be accomplished in beautifying the temple of our God. The present crisis of our country is a fearful one. The enemy is rapidly collecting his forces and mustering his armies. His blood-stained banner is widely unfurling, and upon it is unchangeably written, "Catholicism or death."

That great and beautiful Valley, which has been the pride and boast of our country for the fertility of its soil, is to become the spot from whence shall emanate streams which shall make glad the city of our God, or spread moral poison and death through that Eden of our land. To the present generation is left the decision of this momentous question. Upon the teachers now enlisted, rests a charge which Gabriel might tremble to assume. Every trace made upon the mind shall be clothed with active energy either to curse or to bless. Every neglect will remain indelible when the books shall be opened, the judgment set, and slothfulness, with frowning reproach, written upon each. "God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the mighty," and hath said, "My grace is sufficient for thee." Jesus is still an High Priest who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and the teacher, going forth in reliance upon Divine aid, entwining the affections of his class about his own heart, may wreathe the love of Jesus around their spirits in such a manner that the storms of adversity and the sunshine of prosperity, the temptations of life's gay spring-time, and the gathering frosts of threescore years and ten, shall not wither and destroy it, but it shall grow purer and holier, until they be fitted to mingle in songs of holy rapture with the cherubim and seraphim who burn before the throne.

A teacher enters upon his duties, resolving to embody *all* that is implied in the term "a *faithful* teacher." He feels, indeed, that he is incompetent to the task, and many others

whom he could name, might better fill the station. He trembles in view of its responsibilities, but he hears the voice of his Master, "Son, go work in my vineyard," and he dare not refuse.

He remembers the promise, "Ask, and ye shall receive." The early dawn of the morning, and the close of a toilsome day, witness the agony of his spirit, as he pours out his soul in supplication for the several members of his class. He takes the volume of inspiration, that he may prepare himself for their edification. He deeply feels his own weakness and inefficiency, and almost shrinks from the duties before him. But he remembers the promise, "Whosoever lacketh wisdom, let him ask of God who giveth liberally." He repairs to the throne of grace, and in the ear of Infinite Compassion he pleads his weakness and his fears, his ignorance and his sin. He resumes his study. A light beams from the sacred page, illuminating his whole soul, dispelling his darkness and doubts. The Spirit suggests thoughts of deep and thrilling interest. The season for preparation is ended; he closes the sacred volume with purer feelings and holier affections. The world is in its proper place, beneath his feet; heaven and the realities of eternity engross his thoughts. He has gained new views of the worth of the undying soul, and he craves the one gift,—that he may be wise to win souls to Christ. He repairs to his class, feeling that every word which he utters and every action which he performs, will exert an influence upon minds which shall live on when the elements shall melt and the heavens be rolled together as a scroll. His pious heart is lifted upward for help, that from heaven's store-house he may give to each a suitable portion. With love's own tenderness, he unfolds one after another, the truths contained in the lesson, and then, with falling tears, entreats them to let these truths make them wise unto salvation. The hour is past, and each one returns to his home, but not as he came.

Years roll on, and the voice of that teacher is hushed in

the silence of the grave; but he yet speaks. Those melting tones and solemn truths were written on one heart as with the point of a diamond. The youth has arrived to years of maturity; the world is on the eve of a mighty contest. All hearts are full of expectation, and for a time the issue seems doubtful. Great fearfulness takes hold upon the multitude, and many stout hearts are bowed down like the bulrush. At length the enemy retreats, and songs of deliverance begin to be heard in the streets. But who is that "Luther," in the forefront of the hottest battle, whose words are as burning coals before the "man of sin?"

Who are those mothers and daughters in Israel, whose ceaseless prayers have stayed up the hands of those who fainted not, neither were weary in hours of greatest difficulty and danger? Could that faithful teacher look down from his mansion of glorious rest, he might there recognize those pupils into whose hearts he cast the seed which is thus bringing forth fruit.

Say, then, dear reader, will you be *that* teacher? A light from Calvary illumines the only path to heaven: will you not lead the footsteps of your class to *tread* that path? A glory beams from the mercy-seat; will you not be the medium through which it shall reach the hearts of your pupils, chasing away the thickly gathering mists of sin and error? Seize, then, upon the *present* moment, and this privilege may be yours. By unfaithfulness or neglect, you may stand as an impenetrable screen between them and the melting scenes of Calvary. O, do it not! All heaven is interested in the course which you pursue. Be watchful, be prayerful, be active, be self-denying, and thoroughly furnished with the whole gospel armor. Be clothed in the panoply of heaven, and in the great day you shall hear the welcome, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!"

C. A.

THE RIGHT METHOD OF READING AND STUDYING.

Some books are worth reading but once; or, we might justly say, are not worth reading at all; but the best books are worth reading many times. Parents, teachers, will you not read fewer books, and study better what you do read? Will you not enforce this upon your children and pupils? We may sometimes read for amusement, for necessary relaxation; and then we may read with rapidity, and but once. The mind is like the body, and one study, long continued, fatigues it, just as one kind of motion fatigues the limb that is exerted, and not that limb only but the whole body; and motion of another kind rests the whole body. So a change of study rests the mind. Serious or severe study may need to be followed by light reading, or other mental employment that does not task the same powers of the mind as does the severe study.

But while you read rapidly many books, have some tried volumes, with which you will be familiar, which you can quote, with which you can compare what you read. Be well acquainted with some subjects, and with some authors.

Be especially familiar with the word of God. I knew a candidate for the ministry who at his examination for ordination, was asked a question in relation to some point of scriptural history, and a point not very obscure neither, and he could not answer the question. I then thought that our course of academical, collegiate and theological study was not scriptural enough, and that our ordination and installation examinations were not as scriptural as they should be. We go around the circumference too much, and do not approach the centre enough.

Adopt, then, the plan of knowing something well; and urge this plan on others. A page of Latin or Greek thoroughly conned, may give a scholar more real learning than five or ten pages hastily gone over, or got over.

We want words as well as things; and we want words familiar to the mind by frequent and continued repetition. This is an advantage growing out of the old use made of the Assembly's Catechism. The words were chiselled, as it were, in the scholar's mind, by repetition, year after year; and then, when he was old, mature in years, he could read, study and understand them. We want thoughts, but we want words too. We want the precious ointment, but we want the alabaster box also to contain it. If we do not study sound words more, we shall not be enriched with solid thoughts. F.

REV. E. HALL'S ADDRESS

AT THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE MASS. SABBATH SCHOOL SOCIETY.

At the recent anniversary meeting of the Massachusetts Sabbath School Society, Rev. Edwin Hall, of Norwalk, Con., and author of The Puritans and their Principles, made an interesting address on that peculiar feature of the Society, "that it had special regard to the wants of its own denomination."

That he might not be misunderstood in his remarks, he said, "This Society is denominational, not in limiting the range of its publications to the truths which distinguish us from others: it embraces the whole field of Christian truth and duty; it gives to our denominational peculiarities no greater prominence than, as we apprehend, they hold in the word of God. It is denominational, not in the attitude of hostility to any other denomination. It comes into conflict with no other organization which has for its end the propagation of the gospel and the salvation of men. It holds the great characteristic of our denomination, in that it never forgets that our Lord has other sheep, not of our particular inclosure, other flocks which he loves, and whose lambs also he gathers with his arms."

After a full and hearty recognition of the "common field" of Christianity, on which the several denominations of evangelical Christians can meet, and a readiness to do every thing that we may righteously do, to strengthen the ties of Christian love, he proceeds:

It is not to be concealed, however, that there are great principles, which we deem so important, that they constitute

the landmarks which distinguish us, and, in some respects, the several denominations which most closely symbolize with us, from others. We deem it no offence to maintain these truths. If we did not consider them as greatly important, we would break down our inclosures and throw away the unimportant and unmeaning standards, held only as matters of indifference on our part, while they are occasions of dislike or of separation to our brethren. In fields where we may, with advantage to the cause of truth and salvation, unite with others, in the work of gathering a heterogeneous population, and instructing them in the rudiments of the gospel, there we will be the first to unite and the last to separate.

But grant every thing that may be urged from this consideration: it is still our duty carefully to instruct our own children in the great truths which we deem it so important to maintain.

Let no one ask me to withhold from my children any part of that great system of truth, which I have received to hold as the truth of God. I cannot be so liberal of God's truth, or of my children's everlasting welfare. I am no independent proprietor here, that I may give or withhold at my pleasure; I am but a steward. Let no one ask me to withhold from my children the food which nourished the fathers of New England. Let no one ask of me the privilege of taking that food away from the provisions to be set before my children. I have seen the wholesome effects of that nourishment, in the strength, stability, and well-developed growth and vigor of the early generations of New England.

In every *common* field, and in every proper object of union. I will concede to the utmost all that may lawfully be conceded. But as a parent or as a pastor, when seeking for books for the youth of my family and of my pastoral charge, it is no recommendation, when one offers me an extended catalogue, and says,—"In all these books you will find nothing peculiar to your denomination: all the distinctive

views, which you and your fathers have loved so well, are carefully excluded from them. Whatever old standard books are here, they have all undergone revision, and whatever is peculiar has been erased." What! the peculiar doctrines of my fathers erased from my fathers' household books! The catechism which instructed my childhood, and which has yielded me fruit in my riper years,—that catechism, and every thing like it, expurgated from the list? All books like that which tells of our "New England Revivals," carefully shut out! The fathers of New England either entirely excluded, or else so altered, that no features in which they were peculiar are suffered to remain? Is this the recommendation of the religious instruction which I am to give my children? No, brethren. It may be well elsewhere: but this is not all that I and my children desire. I should deem the church to which I belong, unfaithful to the truth and to her trust, should she train up her children so. I stand for nothing in my denomination, which I do not deem greatly essential to the truth, and to the salvation of dying men. And I cannot consent that these things shall, on system, be taken from the books which are so largely to mould the future character and principles of my children, and which are perhaps to decide their everlasting destiny.

I repeat it, in fields where union of effort is desirable and proper, and so long as union is possible, I will stand with all my heart on common ground. My right hand shall forget her cunning ere it be lifted to obstruct so desirable or so necessary a union. It must not, however, be forgotten, that no ministers, churches, or Sabbath school scholars, in any field, however new, are long allowed so to stand. If we teach nothing peculiar, others will. And I cannot think it the best policy any where to withhold our peculiar views, through fear that others may not be so readily gathered in. I know not how to improve God's truth by omissions designed to render it less impalatable to fallen man. "He that hath

my word, let him speak my word faithfully: what is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord." Whatever is worth retaining in the church, is surely worth teaching to the children.

I cannot resist the conviction that our churches are themselves put in charge by God, with the important trust of training their own children. They have no trust more important than this or more sacred; even the holy work of missions is secondary to this, and they will not do well to give into the hands of any mingled society on earth, the exclusive privilege of furnishing the books for their Sabbath schools. The church once organized, any where, if its children learn not our principles from ourselves, they will not fail to learn them from the erroneous representations of others.

The wants of our churches in the new settlements, soon become essentially like our own. Indeed, why should not our churches every where, make it their principle carefully to instruct their children in the whole counsel of God? The necessity for sound instruction in the truth is every where the same. Above all things, the materials for such instruction should not be withholden from the Sabbath schools under the supervision of our pastors and churches at the West. We are now laying in that field, the foundations for many generations; and if those foundations are worth laying, they are worth laying well. It is no system of flying agencies, no enginery of mere expedients, that is to decide, in our western world, the battle of the great day; but God's truth, God's institutions established there, as our pilgrim fathers established them here: and so established there, the work is well nigh done for the whole world.

I rejoice to learn, from your report, that you are doing so much for the supply of our missionaries and churches at the West. I rejoice to learn that many of our missionaries so furnished, have been instrumental in establishing from *one* to *seventeen* Sabbath schools. There are no Sabbath school missionaries like these. Go on, brethren, fill their hands, and the work will go on and prosper when you are dead.

I love this Society as a source of supply for our own Sabbath schools: because it asks not how much we can spare of God's truth, but acts consistently on the principle. that "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for instruction." What pastor, who has witnessed a revival, has not observed how important it is then, that the people should have been well instructed in the truth? It was my privilege, in the beginning of my labors as a pastor, to have for a few days as a guest under my roof, that man of God, the Rev. Mr. Nettleton. I well remember how earnestly he insisted that the young need sound doctrinal instruction, instead of being simply entertained with general truths, and with narratives appealing warmly to their sympathies. I well remember how he illustrated that necessity by reference to the state of things in one of the fields where he was once called to labor. The sympathies of the people were already highly excited, but their sympathies alone were touched. Like poor, unfortunate beings, the young could sob and weep as though their hearts would break: but he could find no evidence of conviction of sin, or conviction of their amazing indebtedness to the forbearance of a holy God. O, no, they were, in their own view, doing all their duty, and more, all willingness and desire; and only bent on efforts to overcome the hard-hearted negligence and coldness of the Lord. "I found," said Mr. Nettleton, "that the work was all to be done. My first business was not to push on their sympathies to a high pitch, but calmly to instruct them: to convince them that they were even then in a state of unbelief and rebellion. For the want of knowledge the precious flood of sympathy was running to waste, and for the want of instruction they were in imminent danger of taking up with a false conversion, or of being hardened unto death."

As I love the truth, as I desire the salvation of men, I must plead the importance of giving, to our own children at least, the truths we have found so efficacious in exalting God,

and abasing the pride of the human heart, unmutilated, unalloyed and undisguised. I hope this Society will continue to live in the hearts, the benefactions, and the prayers of the churches of New England.

THE GREAT FAULT.

The great fault in our Sabbath school,—says one of the most venerable pastors in our State,—is the neglect of parents to give thorough instruction to their children on the lessons. This work should be commenced in families, on the preceding Sabbath, and followed up, as opportunity presents, through the week, till the scholar can answer every question, and open to every passage of Scripture. Such a thorough training at home, would give great interest and profit to the Sabbath school. Let parents once make the experiment. It is lamentably the fact, that nearly the whole responsibility is thrown upon the teacher. Where the whole work of preparation is put off till the Sabbath morning, hurried over by parents, amidst preparation for going to the house of God, there must be a failure of awakening that deep interest in the lessons, which is essential to the prosperity of the school. Instruction in the Sabbath school, is the *aid to*, and not the *substitute* for, parental instruction.

TEACHERS AND PUPILS MUTUALLY BENEFITED.

The teachers, says a superintendent, are generally in their places, and appear to take a lively interest in the welfare of their scholars; and we cannot but think, that both teachers and scholars receive a blessing in attending upon Sabbath school instruction. While the scholar is receiving instruction from the teacher, the teacher is receiving instruction from him who is able to instruct all who will look unto him for instruction.

THE VALUE OF A BIBLE.

Captain Knox, the Ceylon traveler, was captured by the Cingalese in the year 1659, and detained as a slave in the interior of the Island nearly twenty years. He gives the following account of his "providential discovery and acquisition of a Bible."

"It came to pass, one day, as I was fishing, an old man passed by, and seeing me, asked the boy with me if I could read in a book; he was answered, 'yes.' 'The reason that I ask,' said the old man, 'is because I have one, I got when the Portuguese lost Colombo, and if your master please to buy it, I will sell it him;' which, when I heard of, I bid my boy go to his house with him, which was not far off, and bring it to me, making no great account of the matter, supposing it might be some Portuguese book. The boy having formerly served the English, knew the book, and as soon as he had got it in his hands, came running with it, calling out to me, 'It is a Bible!' It startled me to hear him mention the name of a Bible, for I neither had one, nor scarcely could ever think to see one; upon which I flung down my angle, and went to meet him. The first place the book opened to, after I took it in my hand, was the sixteenth chapter of the Acts; and the first place my eye pitched on, was the thirtieth and thirty-first verses, where the jailer asked St. Paul, 'What must I do to be saved? And he answered; saying, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved and thine house!' The sight of this book so rejoiced and affrighted me together, that I cannot say which was greater; the joy for that I had got sight of a Bible, or the fear that I had not enough to buy it; having then but one pagoda in the world, I willingly would have given that for it, had it not been for my boy, who dissuaded me from giving so much; alleging my necessity for money many other ways, and undertaking to procure the book for a far minor price; however,

I thought I could give my piece of gold at last, if other means should fail. The sight indeed of this Bible so overjoyed me, as if an angel had spoken to me from heaven; to see that my most gracious God had prepared such an extraordinary blessing for me, which I did, and ever shall look upon as miraculous; to bring unto me a Bible, in my own native language, and that in such a remote part of the world, where his name was not so much as known, and where any Englishman was never known to have been before. I looked upon it as somewhat of the same nature as the Ten Commandments he had given the Israelites out of heaven; it being the thing for want whereof I had so often mourned, nay, and shed tears too; and than the enjoyment whereof there could be no greater joy in the world to me. Upon the sight of it, I left off fishing; God having brought a fish to me that my soul had longed for—and now how to get it, and enjoy the same, all the powers of my soul were employed. I gave God hearty thanks that he had brought it so near me, and most earnestly prayed that he would bestow it on me. Now, it being well towards evening, and not having wherewithal to buy it about me, I departed home, telling the old man, that in the morning I would send my boy to buy it of him.

"All that night I could take no rest for thinking on it, fearing lest I might be disappointed of it. In the morning, as soon as it was day, I sent the boy with a knit cap he had made for me, to buy the book, praying, in my heart, for good success, which it pleased God to grant; for that cap purchased it, and the boy brought it to me to my great joy, which did not a little comfort me over all my afflictions." F.

A LITTLE boy one day said to his superintendent, with an animated countenance, "I have got a good teacher now, he explains the lesson: I never had a teacher before who did any thing but ask the questions." *Good* teachers often occasion animated countenances, and not unfrequently *tearful* eyes.

DEACON ELIJAH F. WOODWARD.

The providence of God, now and then, brings under our consideration exhibitions of character that both good and bad may profitably contemplate. Persons more or less remote from each other, as to time and place, are raised up and qualified by the grace of God, to act an important part in the world; and when they pass away, the fragrance of their names remains, and their memory is blessed. Such a person was the late Deacon Elijah F. Woodward, of Newton, who died suddenly, of a disease of the heart, April 16, aged fifty-nine years.

A brief notice of some of his prominent characteristics, it is believed, will be acceptable, not only to his numerous acquaintances, but to the many readers of the Visiter.

1. It may be proper that we should notice his conversion to God,—the great event that decided his character and the future course of his life.

It is, indeed, understood by all evangelical Christians, that all genuine piety begins with moral regeneration. Piety always presupposes that the heart has been renewed by the divine Spirit,—that it has been cured of its native alienation from God, and been brought to love his glorious character, and to submit to his holy pleasure. "For every one that loveth is born of God." This truth is illustrated and our convictions are confirmed by the religious experience of Deacon Woodward.

If any can boast of amiable dispositions, and rely on the natural goodness of their hearts, he might have done it. For, probably not one in a thousand, was so perfect a pattern of all that is amiable and lovely in the natural character. And, besides all that was lovely in his natural disposition, his character was adorned with every social virtue, and from his childhood, he manifested a sacred regard for the ordinances and institutions of religion. So thoroughly was his mind

imbued with the importance of maintaining family religion, that on the decease of his father, he took it upon himself to continue the family devotions.

But, notwithstanding his natural character was so lovely, and his life so entirely beyond reproach, he had a thorough conviction of the alienation of his heart from God, and that all that was so amiable and indeed exemplary in his character, did not amount to holiness. He felt that however just was the estimation in which he was held by his fellow-men, still his heart was not right in the sight of God, and nothing but "the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost," could constitute him a friend of God, and prepare him for a better world.

These rational convictions, produced by the word and Spirit of God, prepared him to feel his need of the grace of the gospel, and to receive the Saviour it reveals. And when at last, his heart was humbled and broken for sin, his repentant soul laid hold on Christ as his atoning Saviour, his Lord and his God. From that moment, peace that passeth all understanding, filled his mind; he commenced a new life, and his character exhibited the additional charms of a cheerful and spiritual religion; and a life of uncommon usefulness bore uniform testimony to the genuineness of his piety.

2. As a result of religious experience, eminently evangelical and thorough, Dea. Woodward ever manifested a tender conscience. This sterling virtue equally manifested itself in the duties of religion and in the intercourse of life. Other men might manœuvre and practise intrigue. His conduct was open and fair. Other men might test the integrity of their conduct by the statute book or the practice of the trade. It was his custom to inquire whether the conduct in question was right, as the Bible estimates conduct. Other men might think small offences were to be tolerated. It was enough for him that they were offences; he could tolerate nothing that he believed was wrong.

Such a conscience made him prompt and constant in all his religious duties, constant in his attendance upon public worship, and the weekly meetings of the church; and though his residence was more than two miles from the place of worship, he was rarely behind the time. It made him prompt and faithful in all his business engagements, and in the discharge of numerous public duties placed his character beyond reproach. We often hear it said, of men who have a reputation for piety, that they are excellent men, true and faithful in all their dealings; but they are *dreadful hard* for a bargain, and always get the highest price for every thing. Such, however, was not the character of Deacon Woodward. He was indeed, true and faithful in all his dealings; but, though he was almost constantly employed in the service of other persons or the public, he was proverbially moderate in his charges. And, in these days of hasting to be rich, such a feature in his character deserves a special notice.

3. A tender conscience, regulating all his business intercourse with society, would seem to indicate a heart uncommonly benevolent. And such we believe to have been true. He had long been in the habit of contributing largely, according to his means, to the various objects of Christian benevolence; but he did not confine his benevolence to public charities; though in moderate circumstances, he contributed largely, from his private resources, to promote every laudable and important object in his neighborhood, not forgetting the noiseless charities that bless the poor and the needy. This he did, not as many, because he was invited: but unsolicited and without giving any account of what he had done. In short, those who best understood his private history, best know that he was among the few who understand what it is to make pecuniary *sacrifices* to promote the cause of Christ. And though his occupation very much engrossed his time, yet he had always time to spare when any important public or private interests demanded his attention or his efforts.

He loved his Sabbath school. Thirty years ago he saw it gathered. He was its first superintendent, and with the exception of one year, its only one till the time of his death. He watched over its interests with paternal solicitude, and labored diligently to promote its prosperity. The library, during the whole period of the school's existence, was under his care and well cared for. Yet with all these cares constantly demanding his attention, he found time to devote to the choir. He was forty-eight years a member of it; and during about half that period its instructor and leader. To his benevolence and sound discretion, it is indebted for its peace and prosperity.

4. Deacon Woodward's consistent but unostentatious piety conferred on him, through the suffrages of his brethren, the office of Deacon, when he was twenty-eight years old. And from that day to the day of his death, thirty-one years, it is believed he was never absent from the communion of the church and very rarely from church on any other occasion. He was the main pillar of the church and society with which he worshipped; a man of rare excellences;—a man of peace and a peace-maker.

5. It is interesting to trace such a character to its origin. We believe that the influences that produced it lie far back. Four generations of his paternal ancestry lived and died in the house in which Deacon Woodward was born and died; and each of them, like himself, was a Deacon and Town Clerk. And each, we cannot doubt, recognized his personal interest in God's everlasting covenant; and relying on its promises, gave his children to God in baptism. The subject of these remarks was baptized at five days old. And having began right, when he was older he did not depart from the good way in which he had been trained. His six children, in their turn, were dedicated to God in the same manner; and long since they have all acknowledged their father's God and covenanted with him to be his. The seventh genera-

tion, under the same paternal roof, now bears the seal of the covenant, and the hope is that God will remember mercy, not to the fourth and to the seventh generation, only, but "to thousands of them that love him and keep his commandments."

Deacon Woodward's death was sudden. After a severe illness of twelve hours, strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, calm and confident in the hope of eternal life through his merits, he fell asleep. W. B.

TEACHERS' INFLUENCE ON THEIR SCHOLARS.

If the question should be put to me by any of you, "How is prayerfulness, hopefulness and confidence to be of any use to my scholars?" my reply is, that they will more or less influence your every action, and leave an impression on the minds of your scholars, to your advantage, thereby increasing your power over them. Think not that this is mere imagination. There is hardly a boy in your schools, that has not some general impression of the cheerfulness or gravity, or good temper, or hastiness, kindness or severity of his teachers. If you are wise, and humble-minded, and kind, your scholars know it; and if you are ignorant, and proud, and ill-tempered, depend upon it, they know it also.

It is said of a celebrated character, that no one could stand under a gateway with him to take shelter from a shower of rain, without perceiving that he was a good man. Thus should it be felt. Every scholar he has should know, not that he is a great man, but that he is a good man, a man of prayer, of hope, of faith, and of confidence.

My firm belief is, that a Sabbath school teacher can get no good without, in some measure or other, imparting it to those he instructs, for every thing that makes him a wiser and a better man, renders him also a wiser and a better teacher. Ephraim Holding.

ADALINE, THE BLIND COLORED GIRL.

Miss Adaline Hill,—a colored girl, aged seventeen years, —has become hopefully pious, the past year. She is blind. She never attended worship, till about eighteen months since. She was a girl of bright intellect, but of course could not read. She was invited to attend the Sabbath school, and furnished with suitable clothing. On her entrance into the Sabbath school, she soon became thoughtful and anxious about her salvation. Her convictions became clear and decided. Her lost and ruined state was deeply impressed on her mind. She felt that she was condemned by the law of God, and that all the affections of her heart were and had ever been, unconformed to that divine rule of rectitude. After a severe conflict between her heart and conscience, and a feeling sense of her unreconciliation to the character and government of God, she at length found her heart surrendering to the justice and administration of God. As the character and atoning sacrifice of the Saviour were opened to her mind, by her teacher, she found peace in believing in him. She has, for eight or ten months past, given decided evidence of a change of heart. She has her daily retreat for prayer; she loves the cause of Christ, and feels anxious for the salvation of poor, blind sinners. Her views of gospel truth are clear and distinct, especially such truth as is interwoven with Christian experience.

This poor, blind girl now sees by the eye of faith the crucified, the living and ascended Saviour, and through faith in his blood, has a peaceful hope of heavenly vision and rest in him beyond the present state. It is remarkable with what discrimination she expresses herself on the way of salvation, through the redemption that is in Christ. Her case carries conviction to every one who has conversed with her, or has heard her relate what God has done for her soul, that the power of divine grace can bring the stubborn, rebellious sinner to the foot of the cross, and cause those once blind now to see.

But there is one fact, in relation to poor, blind Adaline, that ought to be remembered. She says, that before her coming to the Sabbath school, she had no idea of a Saviour, or of a God. Sabbath school teachers may, in this case, see how a little effort to bring in the poor and blind to the Sabbath school, may be blessed to the salvation of their souls. C.

West Taunton.

COMMITTING THE COMMANDMENTS.

We have been in the habit,—says a superintendent in Essex Co.,—once in eighteen or twenty months, of giving the *Ten Commandments* as a lesson, in order that the scholars may have the decalogue always at command. When the exercise was assigned, the past season, I expressed a wish to know, how many scholars had committed it to memory *perfectly*. This seemed to excite some interest, as the result was to be announced publicly. Upon inquiry, it was found that seventy-one out of an ordinary attendance of eighty to ninety, had thus committed it; and several more could say the whole without *essential* variation.

It seems to me, that more than usual efforts should be made to impress the principles of this great standard of man's duty upon the minds of the young in our *Sabbath schools*; especially when we consider what systematic and persevering exertions are making to exclude the Bible from many of our *common schools*. How grateful ought we to be that in our department of labor, for the benefit of the young, neither town committees, nor State "supervisors," nor any public authorities, have a right to interfere, or say to *us*, that the Bible must be dispensed with. If we avail ourselves of our liberty, and of our position to indoctrinate the young within our reach, with the great principles of God's government, of Christ's mission, and of man's duties and obligations, we shall have but little to fear from the opposition and hatred which would banish God's word from the schools which are sustained at the public expense. G. W. H.

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THE SABBATH SCHOOL CONCERT.

LETTER FROM REV. WM. M. ROGERS TO THE CENTRAL SABBATH SCHOOL, BOSTON.

Cairo, Egypt, March 6th, 1846.

My dear Children,—I have thought of you very often since I have been away from Boston, and I send you this letter, believing that it will please you to hear from me. I write you from the land of Egypt, which is so often mentioned in the Bible, as the land where the children of Israel were so long in bondage, and from which God bore them out with wonderful miracles. Here is the river Nile, that ancient river, on whose banks the mother of Moses placed her little boy in an ark of bulrushes, daubed with the slime of the river, and your former superintendent, Mr. Hardy, and I, visited the place where it is said to have occurred. I can see now, why she used the mud of the Nile; for the people of this country use it now to daub their boats, and it keeps out water very well. Here is the river which once flowed blood at the bidding of Moses, under the direction of God; and here, too, the infant Saviour was brought, when his mother fled from the bloody designs of Herod. But the people of this land were very wicked many hundred years ago, and God was angry with them, and denounced his judgments

against them, by his holy prophets, and particularly by Ezekiel. You will find a part of his denunciations against them in Ezekiel 29: 1—17. I have passed through the land from the mouth of the Nile, up to Assonan, the Syene mentioned by the prophet, a distance of 700 miles, and every where it is clear that the curse of God *now* rests upon it for its sins. When the prophet wrote, it was one of the richest, wisest, and most powerful of the kingdoms of the earth, and no one could have anticipated that it would ever be, what Ezekiel said it would be,—the basest of kingdoms. But God has brought it all to pass, and it *is* the basest of kingdoms. The Persians conquered it, and then the Greeks, and then the Mohammedans, and for a thousand years and more it has had no native prince, but strangers have ruled it, and ground the people down to the dust. The old cities have disappeared, and mud huts are built among their ruins. I have seen many of their temples, the wonder of former times, and in their ruins still most noble structures, and I have frightened away the cormorants from their resting place, among their decayed columns. The buffaloes are herded, the sheep and goats are folded, the asses are stabled, where the old Egyptian bowed down at the altar of his god, and the Arabs live in, and among, and upon the ruins. The unclean dogs snarl and bark from the roofs, and in the chambers, once fragrant with incense, the air is now fetid with the abominations of bats and owls.

But, children, I did not mean to speak of these things so much as of some others, which are to be remembered, when we read that God has said of Egypt, it should be the basest of kingdoms. The people of Egypt are very ignorant, and afraid to have a stranger look kindly on their children; and they leave them very filthy, and their eyes and face covered over with flies undisturbed. The reason is, they are so ignorant as to suppose, if you look kindly on a child, it is with an evil eye, and some mischief will befal it, and if they drive

away the flies from its face, that it will become blind. I have not seen a clean child in all Egypt. The mothers love their children notwithstanding, but they know no better. When the children grow up, they have no books, or very few, and not one in a hundred learns to read.

The present ruler of the country is Mehemet Ali, who has had a great many wars, and whose government has reduced the number of the people from 2,500,000 to 1,800,000, by the sufferings, and sickness, and deaths, which followed his plans to get more land and higher power. He required a great many soldiers, and was forced to take the able men, leaving the old and decrepid in the villages and towns. Now, the mothers here, when they had a little boy, were afraid that if he grew up to be a man, he would be taken to be a soldier, and they were accustomed to put out his right eye, so that he could not see to fire a musket, or they would cut off the first two joints of the forefinger of the right hand for the same reason, or draw out the eye tooth, so that he could not bite a cartridge to load his gun, or they would take a little bar of iron, and make it red hot, and then place it in the bend of the first joint of the forefinger, and double the finger over it until the flesh and sinews were so burnt and shrivelled, that the finger could not be straitened again. Is it not the basest of kingdoms, where the rulers compel mothers thus to cripple and disfigure their own children? I stood on the bank of the Nile, and four little boys came from a neighboring village to see the *howágee* or foreign gentlemen, and four of the five had lost the first two joints of the right hand forefinger, and the fifth had lost his eye. You may well thank God, children, that you live in a land where the Bible has made such horrors impossible, and where no ruler can take you away from home by violence to wage wicked wars. But remember, children, that if our own country should forget God and become vile, he who smote Egypt in the days of Moses, and whose rod is on her now, will make America,

our own happy land, what Egypt now is, the basest of kingdoms. This is one reason why I hope you all attend the Sabbath school, and impress the lessons you are taught upon your hearts, that you may become the children of God, and that the protection of our land and our homes may be the love of God in the hearts of our people.

May the great and holy God, who will be found of those who seek him, show you the way of his salvation, and make you all that your superintendent, your pastors and your parents can desire. I remain, children,

Your pastor,

William M. Rogers.

THE GOODNESS OF GOD TO NOAH.

"O, that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men."

Strange that the Lord should visit the evil and unthankful children of men with his goodness at all! But since he does, and that so abundantly, it is surely meet that we should praise him. And who would not praise the Lord, if, with the psalmist they could say, "we have thought of thy loving-kindness, O God."

I have lately been much affected while meditating upon the goodness of God to Noah. One feature of this case stands out with peculiar distinction,—a feature which I had not specially observed before. It was the *complexity* of that act of the Divine goodness. It seemed not a *single* fact; but rather the result of *many wonderful works*, all blending together, to fill the cup and crown the bliss of that good man. The effect upon my mind, as I meditated, and returned again and again to the pleasant theme, was similar to that which the *devout astronomer* experiences, as he gazes upon a *double star*, a *nebula*, or a single point in the milky-

way, through a powerful telescope. How sublime his emotions, as the light separates, and he beholds worlds and systems he never saw before.

Indeed, I flatter myself with having made a grand discovery, and I propose to make it known, though very likely I may seem to others, only "very new in what is old."

Passing all those means and instruments by which Noah's salvation from the waters of the flood was affected, I will notice a few of those features in his case, which seem to me as though they had been thrown in, so to speak, to ensure the blessing God would confer upon his friend.

Noah was a son, a husband, a father, and all these tender ties were graciously regarded, in the arrangements of God with regard to the deluge. He was also a man, and a good man, linked to his fellow-men by a thousand bonds. His affections went out tenderly toward the saints that were in the earth, and the excellent in whom was all his delight; and what a shock would have been inflicted upon his pious soul,—what pain, if the righteous had been swallowed up with the wicked,—or, indeed, if the whole world of sinners had been suddenly overwhelmed, and that all unwarned. Now, mark the goodness of God to Noah in these respects.

In the first place, the awful judgment was *delayed*. "The long-suffering of God *waited* in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing." During these 120 years, Noah performed the office of a "preacher of righteousness," and the Spirit of Christ was with him. What an opportunity to learn what was in man. And when he found the great mass deaf to all his exhortations,—when they added mocking and scorn to neglect, "filling up their sins always,"—when they made themselves merry at his expense, wagging their heads and reviling him, as they passed by the ark,—when they continued to proceed from evil to evil, and would not cease to blaspheme the God of heaven, and hate and persecute the saints, would not Noah discover adequate reasons to justify

the ways of God in their destruction? Must he not at the end of this long respite, thus fruitless of good, and so prolific in every species of evil, have become composed and ready to ascribe righteousness unto God, when he took vengeance? And would he not be prepared to exclaim, with all the holy in heaven, as the fatal morning broke with the knell of the old world, "Amen, Alleluia."

And besides, during those 120 years, the *saints* and *excellent* of the earth were, one after another, taken away from the evil to come. And, if Noah's ministry was instrumental of good to any,—if seals of his ministry were granted him,—these spiritual children may also have been removed to heaven—dying naturally and peacefully. In my own mind, there is no doubt that the *wheat* had all been gathered and housed, before that great and terrible day of the Lord. And all this was extremely considerate and kind, in its aspect toward Noah. How sweetly could he sing of the mercies as well as of the judgments which were passing before him.

In the second place, God wonderfully provided against the sudden and unnatural rending of *relative ties*. When the flood commenced, Noah stood alone, in the midst of his safe and happy family. His forefathers were all dead. He was the only man in the whole list of patriarchs from Adam, who, at the age of 600 years, had not a father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, save only the break made by the translation of Enoch, who was removed at the early age of 365; and of course left his son and grand-son less directly linked to the past by living ancestors. Neither had there ever before, since men began to multiply on the earth, been a year, till the year of the flood, when one man, at the age of Noah, could stand so disinterested and free from filial anxiety as he did. His father had deceased five years before, and his grandfather the very year of the flood. Was not this of the Lord's doings? And was it not in great kindness to Noah?

Again, it was different with Noah in regard to *descendants*,

from what it had ever been with his fathers, at his age. He had but three children; and neither of these, though all married, had offspring till after the deluge. His children, too, were all sons, and therefore their matrimonial relations could not separate them from his family, and his paternal authority according to the patriarchal system. A large family would have greatly increased the labor, and the danger of training them up to walk in the ways of the Lord,—and the liabilities to apostatising children's children, would have still further endangered the family unity—and doubtless, if given in marriage before the flood, would have almost inevitably broken up that unity,—or if unmarried, still greater evils might have been reasonably apprehended.

Was it not, then, in great mercy that the Lord suspended, in this case, his ordinary blessing, and prevented the increase of Noah's family, till he was established in the new world? Was it not vastly kind thus to guard against the wounds that might have been inflicted, had Noah, like his forefathers, at the age of six hundred, stood at the head of a large family, composed of children, and children's children, to the third and fourth generation?

And then the blessed family covenant. God transacted specifically with Noah; but for *his sake* the influence and blessing of the covenant embraced all that were his,—his whole family. "*With thee* will I establish my covenant, and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy son's wives, with thee." This was God's first annunciation to Noah, while he was himself not so much the head of a distinct family, as a member in the family of his grandfather and father. And again, when he was absolutely at the head of his own family, just before the crisis came on, "The Lord said unto Noah, Come, thou and all thy house into the ark, *for thee* have I found righteous before me in this generation." The covenant was made with Noah, and for his sake; and yet, in the goodness of God to his friend, it embraced all the dearest objects of earthly love.

"How great thy mercies, Lord!
How plenteous is thy grace!
Which, in the promise of thy love,
Includes our rising race."

But I will not enlarge,—only adding, in conclusion, that I have examined several other passages of sacred history, after this manner, and have almost invariably found that the goodness of the Lord to the children of men is *complex*,—each act of that goodness involves a vast number of wonderful works. The Bible, I am now disposed to liken to the milky-way. Study it through the telescope of patient and prayerful thought,—meditate upon its themes, and the blessed light separates, unfolding unnumbered and beautiful stars, that otherwise are invisible to mortals. E. H. B.

TABERNACLE SABBATH SCHOOL, CINCINNATI.

Brother Bullard,—Another subject that has interested me much in reading the "Visiter," is your sketches of Sabbath schools. It may be that a sketch of our "Tabernacle" Sabbath school may be as interesting to you. Shall I attempt one? It possibly may stir up some minds to greater diligence and more faith.

On the first Sabbath in January, 1842, a small house, 30 by 40, was dedicated to the service of God, and opened for Sabbath school instruction. It was situated in a new part of this city, familiarity known as "Texas." The first house lot was sold at auction in 1838. Until that time it was occupied as a farm, up to the line where the city population has become somewhat dense. The school house was badly located on the outside of "Texas," for the sake of ground-rents free. The school opened with twenty-five scholars, and a good library of some three hundred volumes. For a while it was discouraging work for teachers, being so far from their several churches. In May following, I cast in my lot

among them. In July, a new church was organized. The school thus received a new impulse. Teachers consecrated themselves to the work,—were always in their places at the hour,—met weekly for prayer and study of the lesson,—visited and distributed tracts in every family monthly.

The house was soon too small, and was enlarged,—the school increased until it was again too small. A new library was purchased, comprising five hundred volumes. Five Bible classes of young gentlemen and young ladies, were formed, and a library of four hundred volumes, purchased for their use and that of the congregation. A weekly penny collection for foreign missions, was adopted, and two hundred "Day-Springs" taken.

On the first Sabbath of January, 1846, the Sabbath school and church took possession of a new and spacious edifice, most centrally and delightfully situated, and, notwithstanding one or two other schools have sprung up around us, we now have in attendance about three hundred and fifty scholars, and forty teachers. The teachers are seldom out of their places,—some have been absent but *once* in four years. Last Sabbath there were four hundred and fifty teachers and children assembled in one room under one superintendent,—E. M. Gregory, Esq. There are now six Bible classes, of between ninety and one hundred scholars, from fifteen to twenty years of age.

The children are now contributing about *three dollars every Sabbath,* for the establishment of Sabbath schools in foreign lands. The superintendent thinks that the *amount* for this year will be nearly or quite *two hundred dollars.*

This school is comprised of children from all classes of society,—from among the Jews, Catholics, Universalists, Infidels and Nothingarians. Our singing is superior to any thing I ever heard in a Sabbath school. The school opens promptly; and, although we have neither town clock nor bell, I have seen the school, with the exception of not more than

twelve, all in their places. I have a Bible class of twenty-five young men in the school, and another of adults, larger, at the close of the school,—mostly teachers from the school. Three of the Sabbath school children united with the church last communion season. A number of the scholars are learning the Bible in course, others the New Testament. A few have learned from one hundred to one hundred and fifty verses a week.

I have, in addition to the Sabbath school, a catechetical class of *baptized* children on Saturday afternoon. It numbers thirty-five to forty. We are learning the Assembly's Shorter Catechism with the references, and it promises much good. The Sabbath school concert is observed with great interest. Nearly the whole school have signed the temperance pledge.

I wish we had more of your books and periodicals among us. They are slowly increasing. I feel a deep interest in their circulation. The Lord be with and bless you abundantly. Yours, truly,

JAMES C. WHITE.

Cincinnati, March 25th, 1846.

SCRIPTURE READING. REV. JOSEPH EMERSON.

THE life of the Rev. Joseph Emerson, pastor of the Third Congregational Church in Beverly, Mass, and subsequently principal of a Female Seminary, is a book peculiarly calculated to encourage the reading and study of the word of God. It is specially adapted to promote the practice of reading it aloud to ourselves and others, and to read it habitually and abundantly. In a letter to Dr. Woods, of Andover, written near the close of his life he says, "And now, my beloved and most respected brother, shall I presume to suggest a few words, that may possibly conduce to render your labors more efficacious. May I be allowed to suggest my own experience. My ardor, which some may consider excessive, is not so much the result of constitution, as of cul-

ture and circumstances, especially of recent culture. I have lately been astonished to find, that under my gray hairs, and my still more depressing infirmities, I can glow upon the most important subjects, as suddenly and as intensely as at twenty, and much more so. The intense study of poetry, especially the poetry of the Bible, often reading it to others so as to give it the greatest effect, has been perhaps among the most efficacious means. Other means may be more efficacious to you. I need not tell you, that it is a time of great darings, great doings, and glorious results, and that we have reason to expect, that these results will be more and more glorious, till the earth is filled with glory."

In one particular, great progress has been made in New England since Mr. Emerson's day,—I mean in rhetoric. The style of speaking and reading has greatly improved.

Parents, teachers, ministers even, mark the words quoted, "my ardor is not so much the result of constitution, as of culture and circumstances, especially of recent culture." Recent culture! Culture under gray hairs! Culture under depressing infirmities! Even then if you are gray-headed,—if you are infirm, if you are naturally frigid, read the word of God aloud. Practise this. Often read it to others so as to give it the greatest effect. Select some most appropriate passages, and read them over and over, until you enter into the depth of meaning of every word, even the least. Your heart may thus glow more, as Joseph Emerson's heart glowed. Should the respected author of this life, the Rev. Ralph Emerson, Professor at Andover, abridge this book for Sabbath school libraries, with this special object in view, viz., to promote the more faithful reading and study of the Bible, and particularly the rhetorical reading of it, a very valuable service might be performed for the public. By the rhetorical reading of the poetry of the Bible, I mean such a reading of it as will give it "the greatest possible effect." Such a reading, as, by the agency of the Holy Spirit, will give it divine power and life. F.

PARENTAL INFLUENCE.

Few parents consider how much responsibility rests upon them in connection with the Sabbath school. Most appear to think that when they have placed their children in a class, *their* work is over, and the teacher will attend to the rest. Yet such a course in reality destroys all reason for hoping that their children will be much benefited. If they themselves are not interested in the school, and anxious that their children should be, but little good can be effected.

We would, therefore, urge upon parents a more faithful discharge of their duty in three respects.

1. They should see that the *lessons are studied* at home. Unless this is done, the best efforts of the teacher will be of little value, and the words of instruction will be soon forgotten: besides this, the scholar will often be ashamed of his ignorance, and thus deriving only pain from the exercise, it will become to him an unwelcome task.

But if, on the contrary, he can go to the school with the happy consciousness of duty well performed, how will he rejoice in the encouraging smile of his teacher, and with how much delight will he listen to the full explanation of the lesson.

Let those who are weary of the Sabbath school, try the experiment.

2. Parents should strive to secure the *regular attendance* of their children. By the neglect of this, the attachment of many a boy or girl to the Sabbath school has been destroyed. Attendance to the *school* should be considered as important as attendance on divine service. The teacher may not be as interesting as others, but is that a sufficient excuse for absence? Are the scholars to be *amused* or to be instructed? A pleasing teacher is desirable; but if *the truth* is explained and enforced, the great object is accomplished, and the words

of truth, spoken, perhaps in a plain way, will be, in after years, as precious and fruitful seed.

3. Parents should *review the lesson* with their children, on their return from the Sabbath school.

This will show that they do not regard the exercise merely as a convenient way of passing an hour of the Sabbath, but as a valuable opportunity of gaining knowledge; it will also afford occasion for parental advice and instruction, which the lessons of the Sabbath school should never supersede; and will most firmly impress religious truth upon the mind. How delightful and profitable is a Sabbath evening, spent in familiar conversation concerning the lessons and sermons of the day. With what pleasure must God look down upon such a family circle.

In one word, parents should do all in their power to interest their children in the school, and to second the exertions of the teacher; and then will these youth, being rooted and grounded in the faith, grow up like trees planted by rivers of water, bringing forth fruit to the glory of God.

How few parents understand their power for good or ill over the future destinies of their children. Let a child be dedicated to God in baptism; morning and evening let prayers ascend in its behalf, let holy influence surround it at home, and every thing possible be done to store its mind with divine truth: and as surely as the Lord is a covenant-keeping God, will his blessed Spirit descend and regenerate that child. M.

I have the happiness,—says a superintendent in Norfolk county,—to state that our Sabbath school was more interesting last season than seasons previous; and I believe it was on account of an awakening of the church to the subject in the spring, and in answer to *their supplications in its behalf.*

STANZAS,

WRITTEN AT THE ANNIVERSARY OF RELIGIOUS HOPE.

Years now have passed since first I prayed,
With untold agony of grief,
That God would wash my sins away,
And give my aching heart relief.

But, O, I never can forget
The twilight of that Sabbath day,
When calmly to my God I gave,
Myself and all I have away.

I could not call the work my own,
The Holy Spirit was my guide,
And the deep stain upon my soul,
Was cleansed from Jesus' flowing side.

Made willing by his blessed power,
I chose the Saviour for my friend,
And cast as worthless 'neath my feet,
All things that would his love offend.

And then, when solemn stillness reigned,
With holy fear, and sacred vow,
I ratified the seal of heaven,
Once placed upon my infant brow.

I may not, cannot, tell the peace,
Which, like a river, deep and pure,
Welled forth within my new born soul,
By God's eternal word made sure.

That word, my joy, my life, my hope,
I firmly pressed it to my heart,
And felt that from its precepts true,
I never could or should depart.

O, would that thus my soul had dwelt,
By pastures green, and waters still,
And only cared to learn and know,
To do my heavenly Father's will.

But where is now that quiet trust,
That calm and sure repose in God,
Which once I felt in weal or woe,
Alike in joy, or 'neath the rod?

If I am Christ's and he is mine,
What can I ask or wish beside?
Then why this weary, restless heart,
Which never can be satisfied.

I hear a voice of mild reproof,
It speaketh from afar, yet near,
"Backsliding one, return to me,
And I will wipe that bitter tear."

I come, on this my natal day,
The birth-day of my precious soul,
I come, O Saviour of the lost,
And at thy cross my burdens roll.

I know that thou canst peace restore,
The deep, dark waves of sorrow still,
While all above, around, within,
Becomes obedient to thy will.

From all the sufferings of the past,
O let me learn to trust in thee,
To rest in God my only hope,
For time and for eternity. M.

Charlestown, June, 1846.

SABBATH SCHOOL IN ABINGTON.

The Superintendent of the Sabbath school in the first parish of Abington, in his report, says, We have had a spirtual drought in our school, during the past year; but we have now some signs of a shower of grace. Some of the teachers begin to inquire, "Why has the Lord deserted us? Have we grieved away the Spirit? Have I been as faithful to my class, as I should have been?"

There are also many things to encourage us, on the part of the scholars. One is inquiring what she must do to be saved? There is an increased interest in the lessons. This, it is said, may be owing to a change in the Question Books, from the deep reasoning of Paul to the Romans, to the very interesting Parables of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The school has increased in numbers, the past year, from 143 to 179. The contributions for benevolent objects have been about double what they were the previous year.

VERMONT SABBATH SCHOOL UNION.

The anniversary of the Vermont Sabbath School Union was celebrated at Middlebury, in June last, in connection with the meeting of the General Convention of the State. After the reading of the following report of the Secretary, Rev. Mr. Steele, of Castleton, the meeting was addressed by the Secretary of the Mass. S. S. Society. After which it was voted that the *Union* become *Auxiliary* to the Mass. S. S. Society.

The review of another year presents as usual, abundant matter for thanksgiving to him, on whose smiles depends the success of the cause of Sabbath schools. The past year has not been a year of revivals in the churches, neither has it been a year of revivals in Sabbath schools. Still the schools connected with this Union have continued, and so far as numbers and interest in communicating and receiving instruction is concerned, with usual prosperity. Through the blessing of God, these nurseries of Zion have been remarkably preserved from the ravages of death. The system of instruction has been varied, and in a quiet manner, and with a constancy which cannot fail to make abiding impressions.

It is a cheering fact, that the system of Sabbath school instruction, after so many years experience, continues to enjoy the confidence of the churches, and has now come to be regarded as an essential part of the established means of grace. At the same time we are constrained to say that their real importance is not duly estimated; and it does not appear that the churches have any adequate idea of the good they might be made to accomplish, with united efforts and prayers.

IMPORTANCE OF KEEPING STATISTICS.

It is much to be regretted, that the statistics of Sabbath schools are so imperfectly kept. In no department of the Christian enterprise is there such deficiency, and yet there is no one where statistics are of so great importance,—and none in which they would be examined in after years with so

much interest and profit. The church will never know what might be done, by suitable attention to the rising race, only as she traces efforts to their results, and marks the connection. By reason of the constant changes of society, and the wide dispersion of those nourished together in childhood, as soon as they are prepared to exhibit a character, and also because in very many cases, the results are a long time in manifesting themselves; it is impossible the church should have any just knowledge of them, without some general system of statistics, by means of which annual returns can be made with readiness and accuracy, and each should be able to look back for years, and mark the history of those who have belonged to it.

It has seemed to your Secretary, that a system might be devised, which should secure this object, if its importance were understood, and some one connected with each school would perseveringly attend to it. For instance, let a common form for a roll of scholars be adopted by all our schools, in which the name of every scholar shall be inserted in alphabetical order, the time of entering the school, — his character for attendance, — for good lessons, — for consistent deportment, — whether his parents or guardians are pious, — the time of leaving the school, and the reasons for it, — and should he remove from the place, record the place to which he removed, that he may be inquired after in time to come. Let there be another roll for teachers, of a similar character and plan, with this addition, that the names of scholars from time to time, be written under his name, so that by referring to the roll of scholars, his success as a teacher may be known at any time.

Such a system would be of invaluable benefit, but it can be secured only by means of uniform blank records, prepared and adopted by each school; and the appointment of a faithful secretary for each school.

Owing to imperfection in reports, it is impossible to form

any definite opinion as to the proportion of children who are enlisted; nor yet of the actual amount of what is doing and has been done. The reports show that there is an interesting number engaged in the study of the Bible, and that considerable interest is felt. Some schools present the delightful spectacle of old and young engaging in the same work, and embracing a large part of the congregation. This is as it should be every where. The old are not too old to learn, and the young will be encouraged and stimulated by their good example. Several schools are cultivating the spirit of benevolence, by making stated contributions for some specified object. One school reports nearly six dollars, another ten, and another fifty-one; thus showing that these nurseries of the church may be made to bring forth fruit to God, even before the trees are grown.

THE SABBATH SCHOOL IN FITCHBURG.

A Sabbath school has existed in this town, in some form, for many years; but no records were kept of its organization or its proceedings, until the year 1825. A society was then formed, and a regular Board of officers and managers appointed. Of the first officers of the Society, nine in number, four have fallen asleep and gone, we trust, to their rest in heaven; of the others, two only are now members of this school.

The first school was placed under the care of a superintendent and four assistants. Of these, three are still connected with the school, one has removed to a distance and one has died. The number of teachers at the commencement of the school, was twenty-seven,—nine males and eighteen females. Eleven of these remain connected with us,—four have been teachers the past year. Of the rest, some are connected with other schools in town; some have removed; and few have deceased.

From its commencement, the school has had many warm

friends and patrons; and for many years most of the members of the church and society, with which it is connected, have lent it their hearty co-operation.

It has been a remarkable fact in the history of this school, that, while the church and society have passed through many trying and discouraging scenes, the school has generally presented a bright spot, around which, the feelings and hopes of those who love Zion have clustered, and where their drooping spirits have been somewhat cheered and revived.

The commencement of the past year was regarded by its friends, as an important era with this school. Its broken state, at the close of the previous year, filled our minds with some anxiety for the future. But the efficient measures taken by the society, brought together its scattered parts, and, when organized for the first time, in our new and beautiful house of worship, it presented a scene which satisfied us at once, that the people had not lost their interest in Sabbath schools, nor ceased to love the study of the Bible.

But while there has been a considerable interest in the study of the book commenced with the beginning of the past year, and while no unhappy divisions have disturbed the harmony of the school the past year, yet it is not our privilege to record the conversion of a single individual. This should lead to deep humility and earnest, humble prayer to him with whom is the residue of the Spirit.

Fitchburg. T.

CONSTANCY IN ATTENDANCE.

Owing to the difficulty of obtaining permanent teachers, —says a superintendent in Hampden county,—we formed our school, last spring, into as few classes as possible, and were thus enabled to obtain teachers who have been punctual and constant in their attendance. The result has been that the classes have been unusually well sustained, and the

interests of the school promoted. And my experience has been, that a *constant* and faithful teacher will be attended by a full class, while it is strange, if an inconstant one is not soon deserted. I would, therefore, say to teachers, let your class always expect you, and when you cannot be present, secure some one to take your place. The class will thus see that you are interested for them, and they will be ready to welcome your return.

THE TEACHERS' WORK.

The work of the teacher is so important, that every suitable means should be employed to prepare for it. Thorough, earnest study, accompanied with fervent prayer for the teachings of the Holy Spirit, should be given to every lesson. The teachers' meetings should be scrupulously attended by every teacher, for the mutual benefit of himself and all his associates. And as scrupulously should every teacher, every parent, and every Christian give a constant and punctual attendance at the meetings of the Sabbath School Concert. The true foundation of all success, is prayer.

Society's Annual Report.

DIFFICULTY OF COLLECTING ANNUAL RETURNS.

The Secretary of one of the County Auxiliaries, under date of May 14th, thus writes in regard to the difficulty of obtaining returns from the schools:

Mr. Bullard,—Dear Sir,—By much effort I have succeeded in securing three more returns. The one from Hawley came to hand this morning, and I dare not delay them longer, as I fear it may now be too late to have them entered in your annual report.

Procrastination seems to adhere firmly to certain schools or towns, as by reference to the last reports for some years

past, "no reports," is the only information we are able to obtain from several schools. May it not well be questioned, —whether the best men are selected for superintendents, —whether they conduct the schools with sufficient energy and interest, if they do not keep records and possess devotion enough to make an annual report of their respective schools, which might occupy ten minutes in filling out? The frequent changing of superintendents renders it difficult to secure seasonable returns, as the county Secretary is often unable to learn the address of the superintendent in the several towns, —and if we direct to the pastor of the place, his mind is so much devoted to other things, that it is laid aside to be thought of no more,—if we direct to the former superintend ent he takes too little interest to pass it to its proper place. Can any remedy be devised?

The difficulty here referred to, has been felt, from year to year, by all the Secretaries of the County Societies, and also by the Secretary of the State Society. Only two auxiliaries, viz., the Boston S. S. Union and Caledonia Co., Vt., S. S. Society, have furnished full returns from all their schools.

One Secretary, in issuing his circulars, hoping thereby to secure immediate returns, wrote one of these various laconic sentences, thus:

"Brother H. Every thing is beautiful in its season. In *time* please execute, or cause to be executed that."

"Brother B. Hazard nothing by delay. One minute too late is too late for ever."

"Brother M. Read, understand, and execute in *time* or cause to be executed."

"Brother P. Give ear. Time flies. Delays are dangerous. One minute too late is too late for ever. Read, understand,—do, in *time*."

"Brother B. A word to the wise is enough," &c., as above.

"Brother W. Time stops for no one. Delays are dangerous,"— &c., as above.

"Brother D. Will you be so good as to see that the above request, so far as is practicable, is complied with in *time?* A full report of all schools in the county is desirable."

"Brother S. We are desirous of making out to the State Society, by the 1st of April, a full report of all the Sabbath schools in this county according to the circular above,—as far as may be practicable."

Will you be so good,—to yourself,—your people,—the county,—the

commonwealth,—our country and the world,—the favor to see the written circular filled out as may please you, and forward to me without *fail*, by the 20th of March or before."

We suppose that similar notes were appended to all the circulars sent by this Secretary, to the 26 schools connected with his auxiliary; and yet no returns were received from *six* of them!

THE SABBATH SCHOOL PERVERTED.

This institution of Sabbath schools, promises to be a great blessing to the young and to the world. But like most good things, it is liable to this objection; viz: *it can be perverted*, —and there are some who do pervert it. It is now expected, almost as a matter of course, on every public Sabbath school occasion, and in every sermon on the subject, that a note of alarm will be raised in respect to certain evils growing out of this institution.

One of these evils is, that parents are making Sabbath schools which were intended only as an *auxiliary*, a *substitute* for parental instruction,—that they are throwing off responsibility upon the teachers. Now, so far as this is the case, a note of alarm and of warning ought to be raised, and it should be sounded loud enough to startle the slumbering conscience of every parent who is guilty in this matter.

But surely, no one can regard the evil here spoken of, as *necessarily* incident to this institution. The evil is seen only where the institution is perverted. In reference to far the larger portion of the young, it is true,—however lamentable the fact,—that the Sabbath school is the only source of personal religious instruction, except so far as they receive it from their pastors. They either have no parents,—they are orphans,—or they have such as concern not themselves with the religious education of their children. Sabbath school or not, it is all the same to them. To these multitudes of the young, surely no one will object that this institution comes forward with the kind offices of the pious parent.

The only ground of apprehension is, that *pious* parents are transferring their responsibilities to the teachers. And so far as this is attempted, it is a serious evil, and it is a most *unnatural* evil. *Sabbath schools a* SUBSTITUTE *for parental instruction!* Why! a parent may as well transfer to this institution, his obligation to maintain prayer and communion with God in secret, or good works before his fellow-men. If he is to throw off his obligation to teach his children the fear of the Lord, and to bring them up in his nurture and admonition, and watch for their souls as those that must give account, he may as well hire a family priest and commit to him the whole care of his own and the salvation of the household, and give himself no more concern or solicitude for any thing but the present life.

It is not merely for the good of the children, that God has placed this work in the hands of parents; but it is for the personal good of parents themselves. Nothing will more rapidly promote the parent's own growth in grace, than the prayers and instructions which deep parental solicitude will call forth. All this inestimable good to the parent is lost entirely, when he gives up his individual responsibility in the religious instruction of his children to the Sabbath school.

But as an auxiliary, no parent will be in any great danger of over-estimating this institution. Properly viewed, it will be found to increase rather than lessen the obligations and responsibilities of parents,—it will furnish favorable opportunities for personal conversation with children, and greatly aid the faithful parent in this important duty, which is so much neglected by many.

Another evil, in connection with our Sabbath schools, of which some complain, and, it is to be feared, have occasion to complain, is that many *scholars are acquiring the habit of studying the Bible superficially,* or of *neglecting a suitable preparation of their lessons.*

The nature of this evil may be exhibited by a single fact:

The Sabbath school bell had rung, and James had found his Bible and question book, and was just ready to start for school.

"James," said a lady to him, "you had better leave your Bible at home: you will not need that at school."

"O yes, I shall,—I shall want it to find the references."

"But you ought to have looked those all out and committed them to memory, in getting your lesson, so that you could recite them without the Bible."

"But our teacher lets us *read* them. We never look them out till we get to school, and the teacher asks the question."

This boy, it was found, seldom looked at his lesson at all, till he came to recite! And the teacher did not require his scholars to commit any of the lessons to memory; all they did was merely to look out the references and read them, as the teacher asked the questions!

Here is, indeed, a very *serious evil.* Should it become general, it will render the whole system of Sabbath school instruction comparatively worthless.

It is to be hoped this reference to the evil spoken of, will be sufficient to secure its correction. That no scholar will hereafter fail, for a single Sabbath, of thoroughly committing to memory the verses given out as the lesson, and either the references or answers to the questions in their own language, deduced from the references. Parents and teachers, if they would have the Sabbath school prove a blessing to the young, should see that the lessons are thus prepared. *Society's Annual Report.*

The Bible.—The Bible contains the literature of heaven,—of eternity. It is destined to survive in human hearts every other book, and command the ultimate veneration and obedience of the world.

THE

CONGREGATIONAL VISITER.

NO. 9....SEPTEMBER, 1846.....VOL. III.

THE SABBATH SCHOOL CONCERT.

THE SABBATH SCHOOL CAUSE.

The good men who were honored of God to originate and systematize Sabbath school operations, have mostly gone down to the grave; their labors are over, and their souls at rest. They did a good work. More than three-score years have passed since then, and the work is still going on,—increasingly, gloriously going on; the "*little one*" has indeed "*become a thousand*," and ere long will compass the earth. It is a cause destined to bless and benefit the vast—the universal family of man. It seeks, it proclaims, it rejoices in the glory of a triune God, as associated with the happiness, temporal, spiritual, and eternal, of the human family. Well, and after some few successive generations of teachers have devoutly and disinterestedly prosecuted this work, it has at length come into our hands. The Head of the church has committed it to us with the solemn charge, "Train up a child in the way he should go." O, yes, by his providence and grace, by his word and Spirit, he has called us to this scene of labor in his vineyard; and he has said, "Occupy till I come." "Work while it is day." He has honored our predecessors with immense success, and he will, in like manner, encourage

us, if we only be "about our Master's business." We have the same God, the same guide, the same great and precious promises: herein only we differ, we have greater facilities and fewer obstacles; "the lines have fallen to us in pleasant places;" for us, in this good and godly work, all things are now ready—then let us be steadfast, and success is sure; secured by the promise of God, and the intercession of our great High Priest, who would have the Father glorified by his servants and people "bringing forth much fruit." He himself, when on earth, loved the young, taught them, blessed them, and bled for them; and after his death, and burial, and resurrection, charged one of his most ardent and zealous disciples —solemnly enjoined upon him the touching charge—"Feed my lambs."

I have thought that Sabbath school teachers need to be more deeply impressed with the nature and object of this important work. O to be baptized with the Spirit of the great Teacher that came down from heaven! Herein we have his warrant, his example, his command. The work is of God; it concerns precious souls; it has a bearing on eternity! Only the last judgment will fully discover its momentous consequences on the eternal destinies of man! And what has it done already? It has, to a considerable extent, supplied students to our academies, given ministers to congregations, and sent missionaries to the heathen,—yes, a Morrison, and a Williams, and a Moffatt were all Sabbath scholars! Let all our schools—every teacher and child—know this, and God have all the glory!

It forms, moreover, a chief source of members,—or, shall I rather say, hopeful candidates for the churches of the living God, while thousands have passed from the church militant to the church triumphant, and tens of thousands more are treading in their steps, have become "followers of them, who through faith and patience are now inheriting the promises." Are we of the number, "following hard after God," treading

in the footsteps of Christ, and guiding little ones—the rising race—in the way that leadeth unto eternal life? We are, or ought to be, teachers—Sabbath school teachers. But are we qualified for the work? Are we converted teachers—holy teachers—faithful, humble, patient, steadfast, prayerful, heavenly-minded teachers, anxiously and devoutly seeking the glory of God, in the salvation of immortal souls?

(*London*) *Sunday School Magazine.*

VERMONT SABBATH SCHOOL UNION.

SABBATH SCHOOLS AID THE STUDY OF THE BIBLE.

(CONCLUDED FROM PAGE 186.)

THE point of greatest interest, connected with Sabbath schools, is the fact that they aid and promote the study of the Bible. It is the glory of Protestantism that it takes the Bible as a sufficient, and the only guide and rule of faith and practice. To restore the Bible and give it the place which God designed for it, was the first great object of the Reformation; and the most obvious line of distinction between the Romish church, and those which have come out from her, is, that the former has withheld the Bible, while the latter have diffused it freely, and urged the study of it upon all classes. In many portions of the anti-christian world, the terms Protestant and "Bible-men," are synonymous. How plainly, then, is the duty of promoting the study of the Bible, the first great duty of those who hold the Protestant principle. If true sons of Protestants, if we hold to the Bible, and glory that the Bible is our only rule of faith, then let us strive to bring men to the Bible. How shall this be done, if our own children, not only, but also the children of our communities, be not taught to study it? Does it not become our duty to give immediate and earnest attention to this, till all the children, the poor as well as the rich, and the rich no less than the poor, have learned to make the Bible their study?

Protestants can never justly complain of the sums of

money and the zeal expended in promoting systems of education and religion by their great rivals, while they do not employ proportionate means and efforts, to promote the study of the Scriptures by the rising race. We profess to believe the Bible will be the death of Romanism; but not the Bible unread; not as a neglected book—not merely by its perusal when the mind has been pre-occupied, and the principles of error have been deep laid in childhood and youth. Every note of alarm for our country—if we act wisely—will urge us to the Sabbath school—and to renewed efforts to gather there the infant mind of the nation, and to enlist it in the study of the Bible.

We also regard the Bible as the great instrument for bringing the mind and heart to the saving knowledge of the truth in Jesus Christ, and this ground we should enlist for the Sabbath school. Instead of attempting to enlighten the room by *sweeping out the darkness*, it should be the business of Christendom to bring in the luminary. By bringing the Bible in contact with every young mind, we should seek to light up there the candle of the Lord. Or, to adopt the old figure of Newton, "let us keep tares out of the bushel, by filling it with wheat."

Is not Protestant apathy (not as to mere feeling and excitement, but as to diligent working) more alarming, by far, than our opponents' diligence.

Does it not appear strange, that, as the child is the miniature man, and as the weal or wo depends on the intellectual and moral character of that community; and seeing too, that the manhood character depends so much upon the training which the mind and heart receive in the incipient stages of society, is it not strange that indifference should have any plea of any reflecting person? And as the prosperity of the church, as well as the salvation of the soul, depends upon a familiar acquaintance with the Bible, is it not strange that any Christian should withhold his hand and heart from the work?

LUTHER'S USE OF THE WORD OF GOD.

We have not honored enough of late years, in our Sabbath schools, and in our families, the very words of God. We have aimed to communicate the knowledge contained in the Scriptures; but not the very words of the Scriptures. But some of the greatest men in the church of God have studied the words themselves of the Scriptures, as well as the doctrines contained in those words. Martin Luther is one of these men. He made much use of the words of the Bible. He prayed, "not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth." He did not have recourse to his own wisdom alone, or to other men's wisdom, but he used the words which the Holy Ghost has taught us in the Scriptures. Melancthon delivered Luther's funeral oration; and in his very brief account of Luther, he states the fact which I have noticed. After giving some account of Luther's life, he adds "what shall I say of his other virtues? I, myself, have often found him in tears, uttering his prayers for the whole church. For he almost always set apart a certain time every day to recite some of the Psalms, in which he interspersed his prayers with groaning and tears, and often has he expressed to me his vexation with those who from slothfulness or press of occupation, say that it is enough to pray simply with internal utterance (*gemitu.*) For this reason, said he, were forms appointed us by the divine counsel, to the end that reading might inflame the mind, and that the voice might also profess that God whom we supplicate."

Our minds are more inflamed by the right rhetorical and hearty vocal reading of devotional words, than by the silent reading of them. But our minds are inflamed still more by a recital to ourselves from our own memories of devotional words, especially the devotional words contained in the Scriptures. If the words which men have composed, are very useful to be repeated and made familiar, and to be spoken

from our hearts; must not those words be more useful which holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

Who has not found himself greatly assisted in prayer by only a few sentences of the word of God, which were so familiar to him that he could use them in prayer, could expand them, and enlarge upon the several topics they suggested? Indeed it is wonderful what a fulness there is in the word of God, and how much may flow out from a brief sentence, just as a great deal of water may flow out from one small spring. The sentence may suggest praise, thanksgiving, confession, petition, and supplication. If one sentence may afford many suggestions to help us in prayer; how great assistance may we derive from many sentences familiar to our minds! Alas, I have studied words too little. I have studied things through many, many delightful hours. But words I have not studied enough. Luther was eminent for his prayerfulness. Like a prince he had power with God in prayer, and he prevailed. His faith in prayer was wonderful. His intenseness and constancy in prayer were wonderful. The powers of his mind were wonderful. And yet Luther studied words in prayer. He specially read the Scriptures, particularly the Psalms, to inflame his mind, and to help him to pray.

What words in our lips can be more agreeable to God, if they come from our hearts, than the very words which his Spirit has taught his people of old to use? May not these words be like wings with which we may soar where they soared? And when we try to use these words, in dependence on the Holy Spirit to give us the feelings they express, may not the Holy Spirit influence our minds according to them? F.

HOME AND ITS DUTIES.

THE LIVING SERMON PREACHED BY A MOTHER.

"The pious mother is anxious to see her children renounce the vain pleasures of the world, and make choice of religion as their solid, lasting portion; and it rests much with her, instrumentally, to promote so desirable an end. Religious books, and religious observances, and religious conversation (if discreetly managed), are all very good and proper: but there is one means more immediately the mother's own, and which has often been blessed in rendering all the others profitable. It is the living sermon of a consistent and exemplary life—such a life as impresses the irresistible conviction, 'Religion is the rule of my mother's conduct, and the source of her consolation and pleasure; and we too, though we are not religious ourselves, are indebted to *her* religion for many of the comforts we enjoy.' A young man, speaking of his mother's consistent piety, and comparing her character with that of another lady, who was emphatically 'a lover of pleasure more than a lover of God,' said to the writer, 'I am a sad ungodly dog myself; but I would not, for all the world, be the son of an irreligious mother.' What an opening does such a confession afford for urging the inconsistency and folly of admiring religion, and not embracing it! And conscience *does* urge that appeal; and, in many happy instances, it has proved successful.

'In our workshop,' said a youth, 'we had a reading, thinking man, of infidel principles. He often talked to me, and tried to laugh me out of my adherence to the principles and practices of my parents. I could not answer his arguments; but when he left off speaking, this came into my mind with renewed and increasing conviction—'It is no system of falsehood—no vain imagination, on which my mother forms her conduct, and by which she is sustained under her various afflictions. The Bible does *that* for her which infidelity never

could do; and, by the grace of God, I will abide by the words that my mother taught me.' Christian mother! let it be your constant endeavor and earnest prayer, that your example may produce similar convictions in the minds of your children."

SKETCH OF MARIETTA POINT SABBATH SCHOOL, OHIO.

"The Marietta Point Sabbath School," was organized February 12th, 1843, by six persons (three of whom are still connected with it and are among its most active and zealous supporters), for the purpose particularly of benefiting the children of "the Point," who attend no other school, and also, others who might prefer to connect themselves with it. They first designed it for boys only; but afterwards concluded it would prosper better by the admission of both sexes. The first Sabbath there were present 11 scholars,—the six succeeding Sabbaths, 13, 14, 20, 17, 21, 27. From this time till the middle of June, the attendance varied from 20 to 30. The school till this time, was without a library. When females were admitted, the number of scholars increased to 50 and so continued till October 29th, of the same year, when, the reward of a Testament or small book being offered to scholars who would bring in children not belonging to any other Sabbath school,—the number of scholars rapidly increased, and in March, 1844, the school numbered 85. After giving 30 Testaments and a number of other books, the offer of the reward was withdrawn—the school being at this time as large as the house would accommodate. In almost, if not in every case, the Testaments were given to children who had none—or who gave them to others, who were destitute. One of these Testaments was given to a Jewess, who was a member of the school, and we have reason to believe it was carefully read in her mother's family. The school

continued to be well attended, and at the close of the year the average attendance was found to be 58.

We commenced the past year under favorable circumstances. The school was well attended, the teachers exhibited a deep interest in its prosperity, and it prospered well until Nov. 16, 1844, when the Directors of the school district, whose house we occupied, closed its doors against us. We were then under the necessity of suspending the school for three weeks, till the house we now occupy (which was kindly and promptly offered to us) could be finished. This house is larger and in every way better suited to accommodate the school than that we formerly occupied. From the deep interest which is now manifestly felt by both teachers and scholars, we trust the school will in a great measure accomplish the benevolent object of its founders. During part of the last year the school had to contend with many difficulties, and the attendance was irregular, but since we have occupied the present house its numbers have been increasing and the attendance has been more regular, averaging 67, and on the last Sabbath [Feb. 8] 77 were present.

THE LIBRARY.

In June, 1843, the school was furnished with a library, principally through the efforts of a few young ladies belonging to the Marietta Female Seminary, who associated themselves together in a sewing circle to labor for this purpose. This Library contained 150 volumes. We have since received from the Trustees of the Congregational Church, $9.90—and from friends $14.33, making in all $24.23. In May last we purchased books to the amount of $20. We also received donations from various sources, a quantity of Question Books, Bibles, second hand books, &c. Our Library is in a tolerable good condition at present, but we need an addition to it, and are now making efforts to raise the means. We have had in all 240 volumes, exclusive of Ques-

tions Books, Bibles and Testaments. There are at present 152 volumes in the Library and 38 are out, charged to children who occasionally attend. Fifty volumes are out charged to children who have moved away. Although these 50 volumes are lost to the Library, we believe most of them are in families, which have but few other religious books, and by whom their influence will be felt.

TEACHERS' MEETINGS.

The teachers' meetings commenced on the 25th of Feb. 1843 (the week after the school was organized), and has continued without interruption till the present time. This meeting, which is designed for the study of the lessons taught in the school, is held regularly once a week at some private house, where the teachers thoroughly study the lesson for the Sabbath following, and transact all the business of the school. The attendance has generally been very good, and the value of these meetings has been deeply felt. There is one fact connected with the teachers' meetings worthy of notice—it is this—that just in proportion as these meetings have been well attended and a deep interest has been taken in the les sons by the teachers, the interest and the number increases. An unusual interest has been exhibited in the teachers' meetings, during the last year, and especially the latter part of it. The following are the rules by which the teachers of this school are governed.

RULES FOR TEACHERS.

It is expected of every Teacher in this school:

1. To attend the weekly Teachers' Meetings.
2. To attend the Monthly Concert of Prayer.
3. To visit each of his scholars once a month.
4. To look carefully to the preservation and returning of the books belonging to the Library.
5. To spend at least half an hour every Sabbath morning

in preparation for his duties and in prayer for a blessing on the school.

The school has prospered most when these rules have been best observed, and no school can fail of success with such rules as these fully carried out. The number of Teachers connected with the school, including Superintendent, Librarian and Secretary, is 8 males and 9 females, who teach 15 classes.

MONTHLY CONCERT.

The Monthly Concert commenced on the evening of the second of March, 1843, and continued till the second Monday of December, 1844, when the Directors of the school district closed the doors of the school house against "night meetings." It has, however, again been resumed, and we trust will be continued. In conducting the Concert two or three short pieces, selected by the scholars, are read by them and suggest the subjects of the remarks made by the teachers and others. The children regard these as their own meetings and consequently very generally attend, and are greatly interested in them.

EVENING LECTURES, by the clergymen of the different evangelical churches in town, are given every week.

[*To be Continued.*]

"SHE HATH DONE WHAT SHE COULD."

LET this be written against my name in God's book of remembrance, and I ask for nothing more. And so I thought, as wearied and desponding, I retraced my steps from the Sabbath school, where it appeared to me I was laboring with so little success; and in answer to this trembling prayer, breathing as it did the renunciation of all earthly reward, there was experienced a peace, which my exacting spirit but seldom knew.

The natural heart, and alas too, the heart of the regenerate (for sin remained even in the purest), requires the stimulus of success, to excite to activity; but should this be the case, when by the guidance of God's spirit, we know that we are doing his will? And if he purposes that we shall labor, it may be unknown and unrequited; if we are to sow in tears, when another shall reap with joy, are we to complain or counsel the Almighty? Oh no, rather let us patiently toil, even if our hearts are never cheered by human sympathy, or encouraged by the visible blessing of God. What more can mortal ask than at last, when life's whole work is done, to be welcomed among the ransomed with the blessed approval, "She hath done what she could."

And such may be ours; but oh, remember, Sabbath school teacher, that this glorious height may never be attained, by assuming responsibilities which God has given us, or by a restless ambition to serve him only, when success shall be made sure to our limited vision.

And then when our lips are sealed in death, perhaps the word spoken shall be remembered for good, and when God shall reward openly, it may be that the faithful Sabbath school teacher, obscure and almost unknown on earth, shall see that his labors were not in vain, but that some humble child, saved through his instrumentality, has been the means of incalculable good, reaching far through the depths of eternity.

Charlestown, June, 1846. M.

PROMINENT DEFICIENCIES AMONG TEACHERS.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 95.)

One of the prominent deficiencies among teachers is want of punctuality. In several schools we have observed teachers arriving 5, 10, and 15 minutes after the stated time for opening the school, in some cases when the opening exercises were nearly through. When this is the case, the scholars as a

consequence form the habit of coming late. The devotional exercises are thus interrupted, few can join in them with any benefit, and the whole effect on the order and the spirituality of the school is a bad one. It argues a great want of interest in his duties, and a small degree of solicitude for the welfare of his pupils, on the part of a Sabbath school teacher, that he is habitually in the practice of entering the school after the hour for its meeting, especially when he has but an hour or two in the week to spend with his class. In his worldly concerns he does not act thus. Every morning through the week finds him prompt in attendance upon the calls of business, and if he has others under his control he requires the same punctuality of them. And is the work of training the mind and giving direction to the disposition and moral feelings of a class of youth, in the most interesting and critical period of their lives, of less importance than the claims of business, or pleasure, or personal convenience? We are aware that many excuses are offered in extenuation of this practice—such as the early hour for opening the school—the distance, &c., but we believe that were such teachers rightly impressed with a sense of the vast importance of the work they have undertaken, all these difficulties would vanish. In the opinion of your committee every teacher with his class should be in their places before the time, ready and waiting for the opening exercise. This we believe might be done in every school, by proper exertion and a consistent example on the part of the superintendent and teachers.

[*To be Continued.*]

ON COMMITTING TO MEMORY PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE.

THE BENEFITS OF THIS PRACTICE.

From a Practical View of Christian Education in its Earliest Stages, by T. Babington, Esq., member of the British Parliament. First American Edition. 1818.

"I fear it is too common to be satisfied with a less intimate acquaintance with the word of God than becomes creatures to whom so inestimable a treasure is given. The Bible is at hand, and is often, perhaps is regularly, read. Its different parts are recognized as old acquaintance on each re-perusal; and they are not passed over without care and attention. In this way a foundation is laid, with the divine blessing, of sound religious knowledge, and of solid piety. Still, however, there is often but little readiness in producing from memory the very expressions of Scripture. There is a wide departure from the spirit of the directions given to the Israelites:—'And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates,' Deut. 6: 6—9. And yet on an ability to produce the very words of Scripture promptly and correctly, from the stores of memory, depends often our right and ready application of this our divine rule, both in directing our own course through life, and in giving useful advice to those about us. Have we not all felt the prodigious advantage of an apposite passage of Scripture striking the mind on occasions when temptation has pressed upon us, and when we have doubted as to the course we ought to pursue? Nor is the advantage less, when we can support our advice to others by the very words of Holy Writ. But the benefits resulting from this knowledge of Scripture are by no means confined to such occasions. They extend to the general frame of the soul, and to its growth in grace; and, in this point of view, are far more important than in any other. What a rich treasury for a supply of holy thoughts, and for the cultivation of holy affections, with the divine aid, does

that man possess, whose mind is well stored with the word of God! To him '*nunquam minus solus quam cum solus*,'* will be emphatically applicable. No *lonely walk* will be dull to him. Even sleepless hours on his bed will seldom pass unpleasantly, but will be marked by a heavenly calm, if not also by filial joy. How often, when thus employed, will he find time slide swiftly away, and be surprised to find the morning break on him much sooner than he expected! But these gratifications, though so pure and substantial, are of small value compared with the gradual transformation of soul which, through the divine blessing, will accompany them. Perhaps nothing human promotes more powerfully a renewal in the divine image, especially in persons of active pursuits, than a habit of gently dwelling, in hours of solitude and retirement, on such portions of the divine word as best suit existing circumstances and the existing temper of the mind."

A BEAUTIFUL PICTURE.

"The annexed heart-breathing sketch, which so truthfully depicts the results of the maternal influence over the infant mind, is from a book entitled, 'The Lady of Milan.' We would that the sentiments of the extract might operate upon every mother's heart.

A mother, teaching her child to pray, is an object at once the most sublime and tender that the imagination can conceive. Elevated above earthly things, she seems like one of those guardian angels, the companions of our earthly pilgrimage, through whose ministration we are incited to good, and restrained from evil. The image of the mother becomes associated in the infant mind with the invocation she taught him to his 'Father who is in heaven.' When the seductions of

* Never less alone, than when alone.

the world assail his youthful mind, that well-remembered prayer will strengthen him to resist evil. When in riper years he mingles with mankind and encounters fraud under the mask of honesty, when he sees confiding goodness betrayed, generosity ridiculed as weakness, unbridled hatred, and the coldness of interested friendship, he may indeed be tempted to despise his fellow-men, but he will remember his 'Father who is in heaven.'

Should he, on the contrary, abandon himself to the world, and allow the seeds of self-love to spring up and flourish in his heart, he will, notwithstanding, sometimes hear a warning voice in the depth of his soul, severely tender as those maternal lips which instructed him to pray to his 'Father who is in heaven.' But when the trials of life are over, and he may be extended on the bed of death, with no other consolation than the peace of an approving conscience, he will recall the scenes of his infancy, the image of his mother, and with tranquil confidence will resign his soul to his 'Father who is in heaven.'"

SABBATH SCHOOL IN SUTTON.

In order to increase the numbers and interest in the Sabbath school in Sutton, the Superintendent has visited all the families within the bounds of the Society with which the school is connected. The facts, obtained by this general visitation, are as follows:

The church numbers 129 members, of whom 73 attend the Sabbath school, and 56 do not attend. In the congregation there were 123 persons who did not attend the school, of whom 13 promised to become members. Within the bounds of the Society, there are 29 *youth*, who are not connected with the Sabbath school, and within the same limits there are 33 persons who do not attend public worship on the Sabbath

any where. Of the members of the school, 67 are not professors of religion.

Very few were found, who had ever attended the school that had left; and all the members of the church and congregation who are not connected with the school, acknowledged that the Institution was a good one, but they had various reasons for not attending themselves.

This Superintendent recommends to all Superintendents and teachers, a similar visitation of the families of the parish, as a means of increasing their own interest in the cause. They may find some things disheartening, he says; but still they will be encouraged to persevere, in their work, and they will receive a full reward, as they go from house to house, for all the time and labor they may devote to this service.

A HINT TO PROTESTANT TEACHERS.

A few days ago a Sabbath school teacher was going through one of the most degraded parts of Edinburgh, when he passed by a number of children playing together. Just at this moment a little boy on the other side of the street, espying an acquaintance among the merry group, cried out to him, "*I'll tell the master that you were playing with Protestant boys.*" Sabbath school teachers, the man of sin is busy with children, be *ye* not weary in well-doing!—*Scottish Sunday School Teacher's Magazine.*

A KIND WORD.

It is a little thing, yet do not forget it. You know not how much good it may do. It may buoy the sinking spirit up, and nerve it against despair. We cannot tell what those around us feel. Sunny smiles may cover a heart that is even

now breaking, and that wears the emblems of gladness only to conceal its wretchedness. A kind word may dispel the gloom and heal the wounded spirit. Perhaps you may not know it, but it may bless you when the turf is green upon your grave. Mark that sad and lonely one in whose eye the tear-drop often trembles. Listen to the low sigh that struggles to hide the soul's emotion and speaks more plainly than words, of the agony within. There is bitterness in that spirit; the world may not heed it, and may even look on with sorrowful gaze, or pass by in utter coldness; but be thou an angel of mercy to that blighted heart, soothe its despondency and point to brighter hopes. It will give you back a rich reward, the love of a trusting heart. You may find there a precious gem, one that, though it shuns display, glitters not the less brightly, and discovers its beauty to those only who will carefully seek for it.

> "Speek gently to the erring, know
> They may have toiled in vain,
> Perhaps unkindness made them so,
> Oh, win them back again."

Yes, speak gently to the poor wanderer that has strayed from the paths of virtue and holiness—who feels that he is an outcast, and that none cares for him. Ye are all children of one Father, and that wayward one is thy brother, an erring one, indeed, but yet thy brother; and you may save him. He was not always thus: once a pure and guileless child, "he carolled light as lark at morning," and evening saw him bend the infant knee to lisp the prayer his mother taught him. And when in after years, vice lured him with her syren tones, oh, what a struggle was there within that young heart! What agony in its feeble efforts to resist temptation too strong for the unguarded soul! Pity, while you blame; you too might have fallen had you been in his place. And when the fearful act was done, when character and reputation were blasted, and the frown of a world was turned upon him, is it strange

that frenzy should seize the blighted heart and hurry it on to yet darker deeds, bearing it still farther and farther from happiness and God? Yet the wanderer *may* be recalled. A kind word may do it. It may begin the train of circumstances which shall end in its redemption. There is music in a kindly word that can soften the hardest heart, and when once the better feelings are moved, there is hope. A harsh or unfeeling word may fall like a withering curse and urge on to ruin and despair. Be kind to all. To the lowest and meanest of God's creatures be kind. It will cost *you* nothing, it may be the messenger of peace to *them.*—*Watchtower.*

ENCOURAGEMENT TO LABOR FOR THE YOUNG.

Let childhood be compared to a rivulet just making its way from the spring, and advancing like to a river flowing between lofty banks onward to the ocean. If your object be to give a direction to the course of the stream, there is no difficulty in perceiving where you should begin. If you begin near the source, a very slight effort may change the course of the water; but after it has run far, and hollowed out a channel for itself in the soil, and increased its volume by many tributary streams, it is beyond the power of man to prescribe the direction in which it shall run. It is true the Almighty can turn even the *rivers* of water, but in the experience of the race, this is his strange work. His wonted way is to give them their final direction, ere they have run far, or cut their channel deep.

There are many converted old men, but not many old men are converted. There are many fat and full of sap, and flourishing, even in old age, but examine, and you will find that in most of them the seed of faith was sown in youth. Let Sabbath school teachers work while it is day. Ministers generally find that efforts to teach the aged ignorant, is a stumbling in the dark. Rev. Wm. Amot, *Glasgow.*

THE SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHER'S CLASS.

Could every scene before me pass,
Of pageantry and might;
Yet to my soul your humble class
Affords a nobler sight:
E'en angels from their seats in bliss,
With joy look on a sight like this.

Here young immortals learn the way
To pleasures pure and true;
And thus on every Sabbath day,
The sacred search renew;
For richer truths they ponder o'er,
Than ancient Athens' boasted lore.

See how with earnestness divine,
The teacher warns and pleads;
While round with faith in shade and shine,
He scatters heavenly seeds,
And trusts in God ere long to see,
Fruit ripening for eternity.

Lord of the Sabbath, deign to bless
These kind instructions given;—
And grant each Sabbath school success,
To lead young souls to heaven;
On teachers double grace bestow,
And guard thy lambs from every foe.

[*London*] *S. S. Magazine.*

"DEFECTS AS TO FAMILY GOVERNMENT."

In Cotton Mather's Magnalia, there is an Essay on "The Necessity of Reformation, with The Expedients subservient thereunto, asserted, in Answer to Two Questions." The first question is as follows: "What are the evils that have provoked the Lord to bring his Judgments on New England." The sixth evil specified, in answer to this question, is stated in the following language:

VI. As to what concerns Families and Government thereof, there is much amiss. There are many Families that do not

pray to God constantly Morning and Evening, and many more, wherein the Scriptures are not daily read, that, so the Word of Christ might dwell richly in them. Some, and too many Houses, that are full of Ignorance and Profaneness, and these not duly inspected, for which cause Wrath may come upon others round about them, as well as upon themselves, Jos. 22: 20.—Jer. 5: 7, and 10: 25. And many Householders who profess Religion, do not cause all that are within their Gates to become Subjects unto good Order as ought to be, Ex. 20: 10. Nay, Children and Servants, that are not kept in due Subjection, their Masters and Parents especially being fully indulgent towards them. This is Sin which brings great Judgments, as we see in *Eli's* and *David's* Family. In this respect, Christians in this Land have become too like unto the *Indians*, and then we need not wonder, if the Lord hath afflicted us by them. Sometimes a Sin is discerned by the Instrument that Providence doth punish with. Most of the Evils that abound amongst us, proceed from Defects as to Family Government.

ERIE CO., N. Y., SABBATH SCHOOL ASSOCIATION.

CONCLUDED FROM PAGE 94.

The number of Sabbath schools is 104, embracing 944 teachers, with an average attendance of 789; 215 superintendents, librarians, secretaries, &c.; 5,935 scholars, including members of Bible-classes, with an average attendance of 4330. The number of scholars over 18, is 430. Only 78 of the schools have libraries: these contain 7,857 volumes. The number of conversions during the year, was *twenty*. Twenty-eight schools continued through the winter; 10 hold teachers' meetings; 13 observe the concert; 8 take collections for benevolent objects; and 40 use Question Books.

"The number of common schools in Erie Co. in 1844 was

290. In most of these schools, it must be acknowledged that the Bible and the moral and religious part of education receives little or no attention. Instead of having 290 Sabbath schools, we have only 104. These common schools continue in operation through the year. Only 28 Sabbath schools are continued through the winter. The number of children in our county at the beginning of 1844, over five and under 16 years of age, was 18,637. The number of children taught in our common schools during the year 1844 was 21,791, add to this number those taught in our private schools and those no where taught, during the same period, and the number of children and youth would be swelled to 24, or 25,000. The whole number of children and youth under 18 years of age, taught in our Sabbath schools the present season, is only 5,523. Of the 21,791 taught in our common schools, in '44, 16,268 are without Sabbath school instruction! Sixteen thousand, two hundred and sixty-eight!! more than enough to fill all the Protestant churches in this city, (Buffalo.)

As another illustration of the want of the means of moral and religious cultivation—compare our common, with our Sabbath school libraries. The books of the one class are almost entirely devoted to the cultivation of the understanding, those of the other to that of the heart. The number of volumes in the district school libraries at the beginning of the present year, was 25,452; one and a quarter for each scholar under 18 years of age. The number of volumes in our Sabbath school libraries at the present time, is 7,857—one for about every three of the same age. The books of our district school libraries are generally of good size; the books in the Sabbath school libraries are very generally small—moreover, 26 of these Sabbath schools, or one fourth of the whole number, are entirely destitute of any library whatever. Again, consider the comparative expense of these two systems of education. For our common schools we spend thousands and thousands of dollars—we make large appro-

priations from the public treasury, and consider the money well expended. For the benefit of our Sabbath schools, few comparatively devote a farthing of their property, and many of those few give but a pittance for this cause. Our public schools cost somebody many dollars each year for every child taught in them. Sabbath school instruction costs from 10 to 25 cts. per an. for each one that enjoys its blessing."

We draw these comparisons between public schools, and Sabbath schools, not from any dislike for public schools; for we are their warm friends; but we make the comparison to show the importance of Sabbath schools, and the little attention they receive.

HINTS TO TEACHERS.

The Sabbath school teacher should aim to learn and to inculcate the *spiritual and essential truths* contained in the lesson, and not employ too much time and thought upon what is merely circumstantial, incidental, and unimportant.

Here is a very great and common error in teachers. It is one important cause of the ineffectuality of their teachings as to spiritual and saving results. They often busy their own minds and the minds of their pupils with a thousand incidental particulars, more secular than religious, and having no manner of tendency to renovate or sanctify the soul.

Not that these incidentals are to be entirely dispensed with, but they should be introduced only in subserviency to a strictly religious end. The teacher who uses up all the time and interest of his pupils in describing the cedars of Lebanon; or the reeds upon the banks of Jordan; or the garments that the priests wore; or the costume and appearance of John the Baptist; or in speculations upon the Egyptian miracles; or the manner in which the devil took our Saviour up to the top of the temple; and other things of this sort,—instead of unfolding to them the meaning and sanctions of the divine law; the depravity of their hearts; the nature and necessity of regeneration; the gracious scheme of redemption by the blood

of Christ; the terrors of approaching judgment; the glories of heaven, and the woes of hell,—should not be disappointed if he sees little or no fruit of his labors.

Winslow's Lectures to S. S. Teachers.

PARENTAL CO-OPERATION WITH TEACHERS.

There is one thing in regard to training children, which seems to have been overlooked by all;—the want of the parents' co-operation with the teacher of the child. They are trusted of course to those in whom they have reason to believe they may confide. If that confidence is not misplaced, the responsibility is felt, and the teachers endeavor to gain a knowledge of every feature of their charge, and if a fault is discovered calculated to lead to evil, they immediately make great exertions to subdue it. They watch narrowly the effect of the plans they are pursuing, and if they find they all prove fruitless, they go to the parents, point out the defect,—and ask them to co-operate with them in endeavoring to remove it. Do they obtain it?—Are the parents pleased that such an interest is shown, and do they thank them for all their toil and anxiety on their child's behalf?—Do they consult them on the best means of eradicating it? In one case of a thousand it may be so; but how would it be received generally? A coldness would at once ensue, the pride of heart is touched, the parents' training seems rather to be called in question, and they prefer to have the fault continue and corrode, and spread, until it affects the whole character, and perhaps is the ruin of the soul, rather than submit to hearing their child's fault canvassed. Why is this? Have teachers any interest —except as conscience dictates—and do they labor with all this anxiety, because THEY will be hereafter made unhappy by it? No! Then why is it so? It is a question that can be answered only by the parent; but a fact that all teachers have had experience of, and an error that, if not corrected, will do much to bring grey hairs with sorrow to the grave.

Christian Observer.

THE

CONGREGATIONAL VISITER.

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THE SABBATH SCHOOL CONCERT.

SKETCH OF MARIETTA POINT SABBATH SCHOOL, OHIO.

[CONCLUDED FROM PAGE 203.]

SCHOLARS.

The whole number of scholars connected with this school since its organization, has been 331—of which number the names of 124 (viz. 42 males and 82 females) are still on our books, though some of them attend very irregularly—116 have left town (65 males and 51 females), 26 we believe attend the Universalists' school—37 attend the schools in town, and 21 do not attend anywhere. Some of them would gladly attend, if they had suitable clothing; others do not wish to come. A benevolent association has been recently formed by the female teachers and scholars, through whose efforts, we hope all the poor children, who are willing to attend, will be comfortably clothed and brought into this or some other Sabbath school. A great majority of children residing on the Point, have been connected with this school. Of those belonging to transient families, and of those who receive little or no religious instruction at home, almost all have been brought more or less under its influence, and many of

them now attend regularly on the preached word. It has been our great object to reach this important class of our population, and our success has exceeded our expectations. It is from this class we have had many of our best and most promising scholars, and their parents are generally our warmest friends. We believe they justly appreciate what has been done for their children, and rejoice in the blessings that have been conferred on them. There are, however, large numbers within the limits of this city, who have not yet been brought within the reach of Sabbath school influence, and many of those who do attend are so irregular in their attendance, as to derive but little benefit from the instructions of the schools. We have taken considerable pains to get correct information on this subject, and we have no doubt there are now more than two hundred children in this city, of a suitable age to attend, who are not connected with any evangelical Sabbath school, and who receive little or no religious instruction. Two scholars, who were members of the first class, who attended on the day the school was opened, are now members of it, in regular attendance, and one has been absent but *twice in nearly three years*, and then from unavoidable necessity.

There have united with different evangelical churches from this school, 17 scholars and 2 teachers. There are some few who give good evidence of piety, who have not yet made a profession. Several of those who have joined the church, regard the school as the main instrument in their conversion.

A great and beneficial change has been evidently made since the opening of this school, in the moral character of the youth on "The Point," which we believe is seen and felt by all who are acquainted with this part of the town. We do not presume to claim the whole credit of this change; but we believe the influence exerted by this school, and that of our Baptist brethren, has had a very important agency in producing it. These schools have been conducted in perfect

harmony, and have undoubtedly exerted a good influence on each other, as well as on the neighborhood. We believe it is always the case that benevolent efforts, when conducted in the right spirit, not only never interfere, but generally prove mutually beneficial to those engaged in them.

We have thus presented a sketch of the history of the school, and of some of the most important facts connected with it. In reviewing what the Lord has done for us, we feel that we have great cause for gratitude and thanksgiving, and in looking forward to the future, we have much to encourage us to renewed diligence, prayer, and faith. God has manifestly owned the work, and we confidently believe that when he begins a good work, he will perform it.

DUTY AND IMPORTANCE OF HOUSEHOLD WORSHIP.

"*As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.*"—Jos. 24 : 15.

We extract the following from an article in the [London] Christian Witness.

FAMILY EDIFICATION AND CONVERSION DEMAND THE REGULAR OBSERVANCE OF HOUSEHOLD WORSHIP.—Those most dear to your hearts, your pious partners, as the weaker vessels, liable to many maladies, much depressing sorrow, and a multitude of distracting cares, have a just and paramount claim, nay, an indefeasible right to all the assistance that you can possibly afford them. During the infancy of their children, too, they are also, even with the best management, subject to very frequent detention from the house of prayer, sometimes for weeks or even months together. What is to support them during these long seasons of watching and toil, anxiety and seclusion? Domestic religion! Their husbands are to be their shepherds and comforters. How sad the condition of a godly woman under such circumstances, if robbed of that which she so much requires to support, comfort and

encourage her! Let it not be forgotten, that woman forms more than half the species. Is not the importance, therefore, of an institution so intimately connected with her welfare, incalculably great? Oh! let no Christian female's heart be pierced with grief by finding that God is forgotten in the house of him to whom she has given her heart and hand; or when an altar has been erected, to see it overthrown by him whom she expected to combine in his person the office of priest of the most high God, with the authority of king in his own house!

The family is, moreover, the school both of nature and grace. No other school can compare with this, as a seminary of religious training and moral improvement. Here they learn the principles and the practice of religion, as they learn the rudiments of speech. The service of God is associated with their very first ideas. The greatest event that comes under their earliest notice, is the hour when all labor is suspended, and when the whole household, assembling in one room, amid solemn stillness, proceed to certain acts which differ from all other acts. Thus they are taught first by what they see, and afterwards by what they hear. As mind opens they are instructed by the recital of the inspired page, and by the simple utterance of parental prayer, which of all uninspired instruments, is the best adapted to communicate clear and impressive views of gospel truth, and to mould the youthful mind according to the mind of Christ. In this way millions of the most eminent of the saints have been brought to God; and indeed, it will be found that where family religion exists in a healthful and vigorous tone, the work of conversion will generally be dated from very early life.

The spiritual prosperity of the churches, likewise, greatly depends on that of families. They are the nurseries of the Lord's vineyard. There are raised the plants, which when transferred to the house of the Lord, become trees of righteousness, shooting up with vigor, expanding their boughs, and

bringing forth, even to old age, the most abundant fruit. What is a Christian church but an aggregate of Christian families? Household devotions not only prepare for those of the sanctuary, but follow them up. Persons proceeding from prayerless hearths to the house of God, are in an unmeet state to profit from public ordinances; and those who have been impressed there, returning to such houses, go not to the places most likely to deepen their impressions. Contrast with this a numerous, happy household of children, arising from the footstool of Mercy at home, accompanying their parents to the house of God, with their best attire, emblematic of minds purified from the pollution of the world by the influence of communion with God, in the devotional exercises of the closet and of the family, and return from the sanctuary to a dwelling consecrated by prayer, and ruled in the fear of God!"

ON THE MANNER OF STUDYING PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE FOR SCRIPTURAL MEDITATION.

From a "Practical View of Christian Education in its Earliest Stages," by T. Babington, Esq., member of the British Parliament.

"In order to enjoy the full benefit of this species of religious contemplation, our knowledge must be extensive and accurate. It will not answer the purpose to be master of a few passages; or to be acquainted with many, but only in a loose and imperfect way. The power of selection should be as extensive as the occasions which call for it, and the dispositions of the soul are various; and when a passage is selected, we ought to be able to make use of it, without mistake or difficulty.

Now how will this knowledge of Scripture be best attained? Beyond all doubt, by learning much by heart during the pe-

riod of youth. It is in youth that the memory is most retentive, and the stores it then lays up, are the least subject to loss or decay from the lapse of time. Like certain flowers, gathered at a certain season for preservation, they retain, even to a late period, much of their original freshness; while passages learned in after life are apt to fade, and escape altogether out of mind, if not frequently reinstated by repetition. Besides, by beginning early, there is ample time for laying in a large store of the more important parts of Scripture; and what is learned will take deeper root, not only in the memory, but in the affections, and become more, if I may say, a part of ourselves. In order to acquire this knowledge, let children learn a certain portion of Scripture every day, and say it to one of their parents. The number of verses appointed to be learned, should not be such as to make the business burthensome. When the passage is repeated, it should not only be explained, if necessary, but pains should be taken to lead the young person to enter into its spirit, and to be properly affected by it. Without this, little is attained. It will soon be neglected and nearly forgotten, when the superintending care of the parent no longer keeps it in the memory by fresh repetition. Such repetitions are very important parts of the system. They should take place at considerable intervals, say every six or nine months with the younger children, who are still at other times making daily additions to their stock of Scripture passages; and every year, or year and a half with the older ones, who are no longer making such additions systematically, though a passage which happens to strike them will now and then be added to those they had learned before. Every repetition should be attended by affectionate and familiar conversations, calculated to lead to such feelings and dispositions as the passages respectively ought to excite. If this is done with tenderness and with due attention to the age, acquirements, and natural temperament of the children, and with a care to avoid whatever may make

the employment irksome or harassing, a parent will seldom find any of his children attend him on such occasions with reluctance, but will generally see in their countenances and manner marks of interest and satisfaction."

FOR TEACHERS OF YOUNG CLASSES.

While conversing a few days since with a teacher, upon the religious aspect of our school, I inquired, "Is there anything of peculiar interest in *your* class?"

"No," was the reply, "you know the members of *my* class are all quite young."

The teacher evidently felt that their *age* was a sufficient reason why they should remain uninterested in that Saviour who hath said, "Suffer *little* children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God." And how very common is the feeling, when a *child* expresses some hope that he has given his heart to the Saviour, "He's only a *child*—he don't understand the new birth—very likely he'll soon be as fond of play as ever." And suppose he is fond of his play, does that argue that he cannot be a Christian? Does not the man of business pursue the same calling after conversion as before? And does any one doubt his piety for so doing? He is a man of business still, and let him be so, for God has commanded it; so let the child *be a child* still, speaking as a child, and understanding as a child, and doing childish things; but let him be fed with "the pure milk of the word," and though he comprehend but even a part of the first principles of that gospel which bringeth salvation, let it not be said that he is incapable of commencing a course which shall lead him to the fullness of the stature of a perfect man in Christ Jesus.

Our Saviour has given peculiar encouragement to the young, and why is this? Did he not understand the buoy-

ancy of their young spirits, and did he not know that their minds were comparatively feeble and void of understanding, and that "foolishness is bound in the heart of a child?" And yet he hath said, "Remember now thy Creator in the in the days of thy youth." "Those that seek me early, *shall* find me." But what did he mean by remembering and seeking him, except that they should comply with the command, "My son, give me thine heart?"

Said a mother, not many days since, "Do you think it is of any use to perplex a child's mind at the age of my C., about repentance and a change of heart? She can't *understand* it." And yet this was a mother, herself professing godliness, having pious parents, and educated at a female seminary whose character for piety and correct religious sentiment is not excelled in New England. The child to whom she alluded, was in her *ninth* year, a fine scholar in the common acceptation of the term, and yet incapable of appreciating those truths in which "the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err." Perhaps the majority of parents would not thus plainly express their doubts as to the necessity and reality of early piety; but do not facts prove that there is a vast amount of infidelity in the church of Christ, upon this important and interesting subject?

Not only the word of God and incidents of peculiar interest, but reason itself fully proves that none are more susceptible to the Spirit's influences, than little children, when properly instructed. Cast a pebble out upon the newly fallen snow and it will immediately disappear, but the effect upon its surface will be visible. Let the cold of a single winter night exert its hardening influence, and then cast abroad the pebble. Will it not glide swiftly over the surface, leaving no impression? Just so the child. Each truth presented to the mind, if not sanctified, renders it harder and more impenetrable, until eventually the most thrilling appeals can be listened to without producing any sensible effect.

I knew a child of but four summers. She was one of those active, restless spirits, which seem formed for perpetual motion. She was blessed with pious parents, and had been instructed in reference to the character of the Saviour. She awoke one Sabbath morning, full of mirthfulness and glee as usual, and commenced her frolics.

Her mother reminded her that it was the holy Sabbath, and asked her if she would like to hear a story? "O yes, mother, about the dear Saviour." She was told of the poor widow whose only son died, and how the Saviour made him live again, &c. She was at once silenced, and almost breathless with interest, as she exclaimed, "How I do wish he was here now, and I would ask him to make dear father alive." But she was not satisfied, and asked for another story. Some of the scenes at Christ's trial at the judgment hall, and of the crucifixion were related. When she was told of the crown of thorns and the purple robe, of the mockery and insult heaped upon him, of the cross which was laid upon him to carry, and the cruel nails which tore his hands and feet, her little heart seemed completely broken, and throwing her arms about her mother's neck, with a burst of sobs she said,

"O mother, what did they do so for, when he was such a good, kind Jesus? If he was here now, I would hug and kiss him just so."

It may be said that there is no religion in all this. It is a mere excitement of emotion. It may be so, and yet were we to see an adult thus deeply interested in the character of our Saviour, should we not feel that there was strong grounds for hope that he would become *savingly* interested? C. A.

PROMINENT DEFICIENCIES AMONG TEACHERS.

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 205.]

Irregularity in attendance, is another fault too common among teachers, and the cause of much inconvenience, and

often of great embarrassment to the superintendent, and a serious obstacle to the success of the school. Let a teacher be frequently absent from his post, without providing a substitute, and the unavoidable consequence is that the class one by one leaves the school, perhaps never to return. And judging from the inattention and indifference of their own teachers and others, they receive the impression that Sabbath school instruction is not such a very important matter after all. In this way many flourishing classes have been broken up. One of our superintendents, on account of the embarrassment caused by the uncertainty in the attendance of some of his teachers, has been compelled to request them not to attend at all. We are aware that the most devoted teachers will sometimes be necessarily absent, but when such is the case, they should procure a temporary teacher to take charge of the class, or at least send a notice to the superintendent, stating their reasons for absence. In many cases, however, the most trivial excuses are sufficient to keep a teacher away, such as would not prevent him from attending to his secular employments, and which he would not plead in this case, were he alive to the magnitude of the enterprise in which he had engaged, as an instructer of immortal souls in the way of life, and as deeply sensible as he should be of the momentous consequences which might be the result of his fidelity or unfaithfulness. It may be laid down as a good rule, that when an individual is able to attend but two or three Sabbaths in four, he had best not engage as a Sabbath school teacher. Whatever may be his acquaintance with Divine truth, or his aptitude in communicating it to the young, these advantages will not compensate for the evil influence of his irregular attendance upon his class, or the bad effects of his example upon the school.

[*To be Continued.*]

THE ARK OF GOD ON A NEW CART.

2 SAMUEL, 6 : 3.

The history connected with these words runs back as far as chapter fourth. In that chapter we read that the hosts of Israel were overcome by the Philistines in battle, against whom they had usually prevailed. To recover from their defeat, the people of Israel brought out the ark of God, confident that that would save them out of the hands of their enemies. But the ark of God did not save them. "Israel was smitten ; there fell 30,000 footmen ; the ark of God was taken, and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were slain." Upon hearing this intelligence, Eli "fell from off the seat backward by the side of the gate, and his neck brake and he died." In triumph the ark of God was conveyed to Ashdod, the seat of Dagon's worship, and placed in the temple. But all things went wrong with the conquerors. Dagon fell, crumbling and mutilated, in his own temple, before the ark of God. The fields and the folds suffered—all who approached the ark died.

A council was held, and the Philistines resolved to send the ark home. The inhabitants of Kirjath-jearim received it, and it was placed in "the house of Abinadab in the hill." There it abode for years, till David became king, and sat upon his throne in Hebron. As the ark was the symbol of the presence "of the Lord of hosts who dwelleth between the cherubims," the king desired it to be in his capital. He appointed some of his most honorable men to go down to Kirjath-jearim, and bring up the ark to Hebron. The trust was important, the mission solemn.

Uzzah, and those chosen to assist him in the work, refused the ordinary mode of bearing those sacred treasures. It had been usual to place the ark and its treasures upon the shoulders of the priests. But Uzzah made a new cart, and with the assistance of cattle, took up their march towards Hebron.

Over the rough and uneven road, the oxen shook the ark—it jostled. "Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it—God smote him for his error, and he died by the ark of God." The event filled all with consternation—David was afraid of the Lord—he would not remove the ark unto the city of David, but left it in the house of Obed-edom.

UZZAH'S CRIME.

1. He violated positive law. God had made express provision for the removal of the ark. That law was revealed. It was plain. It was imperative. No man but the priests of God was allowed to touch the ark. It was more sacred than "the mount that might not be touched." That positive law Uzzah violated when he "put forth his hand and took hold of the ark."

2. He put the ark where he ought not. It did not belong on a cart. Its place was on the shoulders of the priests of God. A new cart was more expensive in Uzzah's view, more imposing and respectful. God asked no such service. "To obey is better that sacrifice." All the trouble originated in a desire to do the work of God in a way more honorable than he had appointed. Had the ark been on the shoulders of the Levites, it would not have been shaken by the oxen—God's law would not have been broken—Uzzah would not have been tempted to handle holy things; nor would he have so died. This was an attempt to mend the legislation of God. It ended as all such attempts must end.

3. He did not inquire of God. He was about to do God's work, without asking God how he would have it done. He was wise in his own wisdom. He did not call for the law, nor inquire at the hands of those who knew its precepts. His motive was to do in the best way the work before him. He forgot to ask what was the pleasure of the Lord. Not so began Nehemiah the prophet to rebuild Jerusalem. Alone at night, he encompassed the city, and made himself familiar

with the extent of the desolation. But before he lifted a finger to repair, he called for the book of the law of the Lord, and before all the people, read out of that book, till all understood the meaning. He was disposed to do the work of the Lord in God's way. The law was in Uzzah's hands. It was plain. He need not have erred. His motive did not excuse him. He sinned, and he died before all the people.

The lesson taught by this history is this,—"*A right thing must not be done in a wrong way.*"

1. From all that appears, the motive of Uzzah was good. He was disposed to do in the most honorable way, the work assigned him. The ark could have thus been brought; he could have kept it steady. But all this did not avail. I was a wrong way to do a right thing in itself. Human law requires the same thing—an act to be right, must be rightly done. Men elected to office, must be legally chosen. Nothing is more common than for men to contest an election, on the ground that it was not done in the lawful way. Men can hold property to which they are entitled of right, only by securing it in a legal way. It is idle, in a court, to talk of a better way. The right way is the only one that can avail. Men may be wronged in person, character, or property. They can seek redress, but if it be done in a wrong way, they not only get no redress, but become criminals themselves. Men do as they please, but if they act wrong, their liberty is taken away. Men in prison have as much abstract right to freedom as we, but their liberty they did not use in the right way; it was taken from them. A man's own can be held in no other way. A want of form—a wafer omitted in a deed, has taken from legal heirs a princely estate.

2. Obedience to this principle is the secret of temporal success. Wisdom and wealth are desired by most men. The path to each is open. To secure either, men must not only desire and strive; but obedience to law must be given; men must strive in the right way. Labor, good intent and

desire are not enough. Some men toil enough to be rich, read enough to know, but they put the ark on a new cart, and then attempt to keep it steady ; and then fail.

3. We see the same spirit in the work of benevolence. Some are ready for every work. They desire to do good. They follow in the lead of any one who promises to reform our race. They meddle with all plans ; support all schemes. They deplore the evils of the times, and wish to remove them, but inquire not of God. They do not pause long enough to know what is the will of God. They cast out the spirit of evil, and hurry on their way, unmindful of the seven more evil spirits that stand ready to enter. Men must do good in a right way, else like Uzzah they will die before the new cart of their own reform.

4. Religion has been harmed by placing the ark upon a new cart. Uzzah has not been the only victim. Men wish to do good—mean so to do. No scheme is devised that does not meet their approbation. They get tired of the old plan of salvation—the old way of saving men ; this incessant warfare day by day with the devil ; this slow conquest over the prince of this world. They wish a swifter mode. They get up a new cart, and censure all who ask for the old path and the old way. They keep the church in commotion, the religious community in a state of ceaseless agitation. They deal rebukes about and finally fall, dragging down others with them in their ruin. Such do evil that good may come. They violate positive law on the plea of expediency, and create evil that years of tears and labor will not remove. Radicalism is not the gospel of peace—ultraism is not the lever of reform that God distinguishes and blesses. Wildfire is no improvement upon the spirit of God. No machinery of man's device can dispense with conviction of sin ; no agency can take the place of a living ministry, in the conversion of the world. Many have been the trials ; more than once has the ark been placed upon a new cart, and its momentary progress

marked with shouting. But it has been in the end the death of the ministry and the church too, who have chosen another way to do the work of the Lord.

5. The spirit of this subject is the great obstacle in the way of the salvation of men. By all interested in salvation, this inquiry is raised, "What must I do to be saved?" One answer has been returned in all ages. "Repent"—"be converted"—"believe on the Lord Jesus." No man need err. Men do not wish to be lost, neither do they wish to do the will of God. They are willing to do *more* than God demands, but not *what* he demands. They will do what is not asked. They leave undone what is required. They will wash in Abana, but not in Jordan. They will go on pilgrimages to distant lands, but refuse to look to the Lamb of God for salvation. They are confident that their plan is better than God's. They are better in life, than those who profess more. They climb a higher and more difficult way to get into the fold, but refuse to go by the door, and think it hard that after all their toil, they shall be considered only as thieves and robbers.

All such acts are departures from the straight way that leads to life. All improvements upon the plan of salvation given in the gospel; all royal roads to heaven which dispense with conviction for sin, and holiness of heart; all efforts to make the gate wider, and the road to life more broad, are but imitations of the conduct of Uzzah, when first he placed the ark upon a cart, steadied it, and then died. Imitate him in the first, and in the last his portion will be yours.

Men who live in sin, disbelieve Christ, disobey Christ, violate positive law, will find their portion with the lost in that day when God shall take away the soul. Men must wash, and wash in Jordan. They must believe, and believe on the Son of God. They must look, and look on the Saviour. They must walk, and follow Christ. They must strive, and strive lawfully. They must do God's work, in his time, in

his way, or perish for ever. "To obey is better than sacrifice." As of old, men are sinners. As of old, they must forsake their way, and turn to the Lord to be saved. Men must then, toil, labor and continue even to the end, or they cannot see God in peace. Men must inquire to know the will of God—with all their hearts must they do it or die.

M. H. S.

TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF ROBERT RAIKES,

FOUNDER OF SABBATH SCHOOLS.

Thou shalt not sleep, immortal Raikes!
Amid th' unnoticed throng;
My bosom warms, my muse awakes,
To greet thee with a song.

Blest was thy work! when Britain's land
Was darkly overhung;
Thou didst erect, with gracious hand,
A beacon for the young.

Oft in imaginative thought,
I view the humble school,
Where young disciples first were taught,
Beneath thy kindly rule.

'Twas not a proud, attractive place,
A lowly cottage-room;
And yet it was ordained to chase
The clouds of moral gloom.

Its walks were set apart to bless,
The children of the poor;
And, hence, the scene of usefulness
Did not remain *obscure*.

The spring begins to overwhelm,
A widening current flows;
Till Sabbath schools throughout the realm,
Successively arose.

O! couldst thou visit earth awhile,
And mark this mighty stream,
With what a heaven-illumined smile,
Thy countenance would beam!

But (who can tell?) in realms of bliss
The scene may be revealed;
For why should knowledge, such as this,
From *angels* be concealed?

Immortal Raikes! thy tongue could tell
A soul-inspiring story,
Of infant saints, whose praises swell
With golden harps in glory.

Oh! may thy glorious work extend,
And fill a wider sphere;
Till the whole universe shall spend
The glad millennial years!

[*London*] *S. S. Teachers' Magazine.*

THE BIBLE AS A TEXT BOOK.

A correspondent of the Boston Journal, in giving an account of the oration of Charles Sumner, Esq., before the Phi Beta Kappa Society, at Cambridge, says;

"In adverting to the 'august teachers of mankind,' as he termed them, furnished by ancient Greece and Rome, it was gratifying to the Christian heart, to notice, with what ingenuousness aud distinctness he avowed the utter inferiority of all their moral teachings, to what might be found in the Sermon on the Mount, and in the two great commandments, on which hang all the law and the prophets.

When such unqualified testimony to the superior wisdom and excellence of the Scriptures, as a system of morals as well as religion, is given from the highest seats of learning, it is matter of surprise that they are not generally adopted, and systematically used among text books, for the instruction of

youth. Such a change might introduce a new and glorious era in the history of colleges, and in the moral sentiments of educated men generally."

SKETCH OF ROCHESTER, N. Y. SABBATH SCHOOLS.

Some friend has furnished us with a copy of the Rochester, N. Y. Daily Democrat, and called our attention to an address, containing a "Sketch of the Sabbath schools" in that city. The following abridgement will be read with interest.

In the summer of 1818, the first spark of Sabbath school fire was kindled in Rochester—then containing a population of five or six hundred souls, and among them probably not over forty or fifty children, that were then thought to be of suitable age to attend school. But the older cities and towns at the east had begun the work of Sabbath school instruction, and Rochester, although in its infancy, must not be behind. A few of those choice spirits that are always forward in every good work; yes, the young ladies of Rochester, were the pioneers to begin this noble work, the result of which we, their successors, have met this evening to review. But who is competent to the task? Who can follow the little stream just emerging from the fountain, until it reaches the broad ocean? Who can set forth the value of instruction given from Sabbath to Sabbath for more than a quarter of a century? The results can never be known until time shall have an end.

At length the time had come when it was announced from the pulpit that a Sabbath school would be held; but on account of three uncommonly rainy Sabbaths, it was not organized until the fourth, and had we been present, we might have seen here and there, a child (for in those days groups were rarely to be seen) emerging from the woods, where now run Sophia, Washington and Ann streets on the west, and St. Paul and Clinton, on the east, wending their way to the

Presbyterian church in State street, now used as a blacksmith shop. This was a moment of deep interest. However, it was the determination to go forward; and in the language of the immortal Raikes, "try to have a school." In the summer of 1818, the effort was made, the work begun, and in a few weeks it was removed to the school house, a small wooden building on the ground now occupied by School House, No. 1. Let me give you a view of this first Sabbath school room: the seats were made of oak slabs, accommodating the small classes, while the higher classes were seated upon the desks; as for the teachers, no seats were to be found for them.

We had then no class nor library books. A few red and blue tickets were awarded to those whose recitations were perfect. With such facilities for improvement, it is not surprising that the school should be like a summer flower. During the brief period of its existence, it numbered from 30 to 40 scholars. The school was kept up during the summers of 1819, '20 and '21, but continued to decline, and was deserted by nearly all its first founders. Of the eight teachers who composed the school army of Rochester, Ebenezer Bliss died at one of the Indian missions, Rev. Jonathan Green and Mrs. Delia Bishop have for many years been connected with the Sandwich Island mission; another is still superintendent of a school in Rochester.

In the spring of 1822, Rev. Mr. Osgood, the apostle of Sabbath schools, came among us, and formed the Rochester Sabbath School Union. Four schools were commenced. For a short time the schools were prosperous, but having to rely principally upon teachers that felt but little interest, they soon ceased to exist. In 1823, Mr. Osgood made us another visit, the Union was again in the field, and four schools begun. During the summer the Union was abandoned; two Presbyterian schools formed; also one in St. Luke's church, and one in the Methodist church, on St. Paul's street. In

the month of November, a public examination of the two schools was held in the Presbyterian church, and premiums of books awarded to those who had made the most progress in reciting; which, in some instances, amounted to from fifteen to eighteen hundred verses. After the premiums were distributed, the schools went into winter quarters.

In 1824, the First Baptist Sabbath school was formed, and held in the Court House.

In 1825, four schools were kept through the year. The S. S. Concert was commenced in May; the Monroe County S. S. Union and Depository was organized in August, under the instrumentality of the Rev. George G. Sill, and a small fund raised for the purchase of books, which at that time were very rare, and probably not fifty volumes could be found that would now be considered suitable for a Sabbath school library. We have now brought our brief history down to a period ever to be remembered in the annals of Rochester Sabbath schools, a foundation having been laid for succeeding generations to finish. In the summer of 1826, the Lord raised up the ever to be remembered Josiah Bissell, Jr., who in the short period of his labors, did more to advance the cause of Sabbath schools, than any other man that has labored in Western New York. He took charge of the school of the first Presbyterian church, and through his instrumentality a revival of religion soon commenced, which resulted in the conversion of several teachers and scholars. The Sabbath school of the 2d Presbyterian church was organized in the summer of 1826, numbering about 30 scholars. In the September of this year, the first Sabbath school celebration of the Monroe County Union was held. A procession formed on Washington Square, and marched from thence to the Court House Square, where addresses were delivered to the teachers and scholars that had come in from the towns in the county, to the number of 762.

In 1827 the Sabbath school of the 3d Presbyterian church, and the African school were formed. In '31 the Free Church school; in '34 the

2d Baptist school; in '36 the Washington street school, and in '39 the State street school and the school at Hanford's Landing were commenced. Several other schools have been in operation in different school districts.

In 1833 was formed the Rochester Sabbath School Union, embracing the Presbyterian, Baptist, Free and African schools.

The doings of the Association from that time to the present, are familiar to most teachers, and from year to year, as the several schools have presented their reports, we have listened to them with the most intense interest. As a part of the results of the Sabbath school labors for the last 20 years, 1,073 teachers and scholars have united with the Presbyterian and Baptist churches, besides a large number that have been received into the Episcopal and Methodist churches. In addition, there have been several hundred reported conversions, that have doubtless united with churches in other parts of our land.

Rochester Sabbath schools have sent forth among the heathen, the following missionaries and assistants: Ebenezer Bliss, to the Choctaw Indians; Rev. Jonathan Green, Rev. T. Dwight Hunt, Edwin O. Hall, Mrs. Delia Bishop, and Mrs. Fidelia Coan, to the Sandwich Islands; Mr. E. A. Webster, Rev. Alanson Hall, Rev. Ferdinand D. Ward, Rev. Henry Cherry, and Rev. Mr. Lockwood, to India; Mrs. Julia Johnson to Siam; Dr. Henry DeForest and Mrs. Caroline DeForest, and Mrs. Marian W. Smith to Syria, and Rev. Grover S. Comstock to Burmah. As many, and perhaps more, are now preaching the gospel in our own beloved land, and hundreds of teachers and scholars have gone out from us, that are now engaged as teachers in various parts of our country, and who can estimate the value of their self-denying labors? From one humble, devoted teacher, who has long since rested from his labors, we have the testimony that he was instrumental in the conversion of more than forty souls, and this is but one item in the glorious results that will be made manifest before an assembled universe; and can there

be a teacher, as he contemplates the past, and looks forward to the future, but will buckle on anew his armor, and go forth to his field of labor, resolving that the spirit that actuated Robert Raikes in opening the little stream, shall dwell in his heart until it shall make glad the city of God."

[From our Correspondent.]

LIVES OF THE CHIEF FATHERS OF NEW ENGLAND.

Rev. Asa Bullard,—My dear sir:—The Massachusetts Sabbath School Society has peculiar claims upon the affectionate regards of all those who love the distinguishing characteristics of good old New England Congregationalism, for the blessed work in which that society is engaged, in defending the principles and the men who "earnestly contended for the faith once delivered to the saints," and through whose instrumentality, that faith in its purity was planted on these shores. A faithful delineation of the character and private life of such men as Mathers, Cotton, Shepard, Norton, Wilson, Davenport, and others of kindred spirit, emphatically "princes and great men in Israel," will supply a want that has long been felt by those who wish the rising generation to be trained under the hallowed influence of a pure Christianity. Such a portraiture we have in the volumes lately issued by your Society, on the character of the early fathers of New England. I have given them a careful examination, and there is nothing issued by the Massachusetts, or any any other Sabbath School Society, so far as my knowledge extends, which is calculated to give the young so correct an impression of the sacrifice and sufferings necessary to plant our Puritan institutions.

If our Sabbath school literature could be all baptized with the spirit that marks your late publications, there would be little danger that our children and youth would be led astray

by the wiles of error, misnamed liberal Christianity, or that they would embrace the principles and imbibe the spirit of antichrist. Should not those who labor for our youth earnestly pray, that the spirit of our fathers may rest upon their children, so that our "sons may be as plants grown up in their youth, and our daughters as corner stones, polished after the similitude of a palace?"

I have been led to these hasty thoughts by reading in the Well Spring of the present week, the notice of an application for a library, from a pastor in Litchfield county, Michigan, in which he expresses the desire that "their children may be taught the doctrines of the Puritan fathers." As an individual, I am anxious that their call may be heeded, and as the agent of the Sabbath school of the first church in this place, I send you $15, which you will please apply to this particular object, and acknowledge as our "Independence Offering." From this pastor and Sabbath school we should like to receive *letters of acknowledgement*, as it has a tendency to encourage the school to make greater effort in behalf of the needy.

The interest in our school still continues, though for some time past there have been no conversions. This interest has been the efficient cause of a considerable increase in the amount of our monthly contributions. You will, in the course of the year, receive further proof that your western effort, as well as the entire operations of your Society, are near our hearts.

Wishing you grace, and an abundant prosperity, I am still your fellow servant in the bonds of the gospel. W. D. C.

———, *Aug.* 29, 1846.

"One moment! what an effect it produces upon years! One moment! virtue, rapture, glory; crime, shame, woe rest upon it! Death itself is but a moment, yet eternity is its successor!"

A DYING MOTHER'S LOVE.

"The plague broke out in a little Italian village. In one house the children were taken first; the parents watched over them, but only caught the disease they could not cure. The whole family died. On the opposite side of the way lived the family of a poor laborer, who was absent the whole week; only coming home on Saturday nights to bring his scanty earnings. His wife felt herself attacked by the fever in the night; in the morning she was much worse, and before night the plague spot showed itself. She thought of the terrible fate of her neighbors. She knew she *must* die, but as she looked upon her dear little boys, she resolved not to communicate death to them. She therefore locked the children into the room, and snatched her bedclothes lest they should keep the contagion behind her, and left the house. She even denied herself the sad pleasure of a last embrace.

O think of the heroism that enabled her to conquer her feelings, and leave home and all she loved, to die! Her eldest child saw her from the window. 'Good-by, mother,' said he, with his tenderest tone, for he wondered why his mother left him so strangely. 'Good-by, mother,' repeated the youngest child, stretching its little hand out of the window. The mother paused; her heart was drawn toward her children, and she was on the point of returning back; she struggled hard, while the tears rolled down her cheeks at the sight of her helpless babes. At length she turned from them. The children continued to cry, 'Good-by, mother.' The sounds sent a thrill of anguish to her heart; but she pressed on to the house of those who were to bury her. In two days she died, recommending her husband and children to their care with her last breath.

O that mothers were as careful not to impart the worse contagion of sin to their children!"

THE

CONGREGATIONAL VISITER.

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THE SABBATH SCHOOL CONCERT.

TO THE CHILDREN AND YOUTH CONNECTED WITH THE MASSACHUSETTS SABBATH SCHOOL SOCIETY.

The following Address, by the editor of the Well-Spring, was published in that paper for the last concert. But fearing it may not have been read in some of our schools, we have ventured to re-publish it in the Visiter, and we would request pastors and superintendents, if they approve of the article, to see that it is read to their respective schools, at the concert for the present month.

Dear young Friends:—Through your superintendents, I wish to say a few words to you *directly* and *familiarly*, as if I were present, beholding you face to face. In all I write as editor, and indeed in all that is printed in the Well-Spring, my wish is to speak directly to each of my many thousand youthful readers; for in *each* I feel a sort of *paternal* or *pastoral* interest. You know that your pastor, or minister, as you may call him, cherishes, and often exhibits, a special solicitude for the welfare of the lambs of his flock—the children and youth of his congregation. This is not strange, for when he was solemnly ordained, it was to be the *pastor of the children* no less than of their parents. He was to feed the *lambs* no less than the sheep of his charge. For the same reason, the welfare of the young—especially those embraced

in the Sabbath schools connected with the Mass. Sabbath School Society,—is an object very dear to my heart. The Congregational churches have made me a sort of pastor—that is, *shepherd*, to *aid* them in *feeding the lambs of the flock*. Upon every one of these many thousand friends, I, therefore, look with some of the same interest that their ministers look upon them. Yea, may I not say, with *some* of the same affectionate regard with which their parents behold them.

Whenever you take up this little paper, to learn its instructions, please then imagine that your friend, the editor, is, through the words you read, as it were, addressing you with his own lips. Imagine too, that he is watching, with his own eyes, to see whether you receive his counsel and instructions with pleasure and benefit. If, as he speaks, he beholds in your countenances expressions of attention and interest, his heart is cheered. But should there be seen evidences of listlessness and indifference, his heart—like that of the parent or the pastor, under like circumstances—is pained within him.

My young friends will please remember, that the editor means not to be partial in the interest he feels in their welfare. *All*, of whatever age, and in whatever circumstances, are included in this regard. With those who weep he would ever weep, and rejoice with those who rejoice. With the orphan he would sympathise, and direct them to the Father of the fatherless, who, "when their father and mother forsake them, will take them up." By the bed-side of the sick, he would love to watch, to moisten their parched lips, to cool their burning temples, and tell them of the great Physician. To those who are passing through the dark valley of the shadow of death, he would be as the Saviour's "rod and staff," to comfort them. To the gay and thoughtless, kindly would he speak a word of exhortation and warning. Those burdened with a sense of sin, who wet their pillows with the

tears of sorrow, and inquire what they shall do to be saved, he would take affectionately by the hand, and lead them to the "Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world." And over those who have repented, with the angels of God, would he mingle his joy and rejoicings.

These being the feelings I profess to cherish towards all my young friends, no one will wonder at my wish, through your superintendents, to address you while *assembled at the concert.* Only a portion of your number am I permitted to address in my *weekly* visits through the Well-Spring. Were a copy of this paper introduced into all your families, then I could extend my instructions, and warnings, and exhortations, and counsels, to you all. And one thing that I wish to say to you at this concert,—and the only one it will do for me to take time for saying now,—is, to express my desire to include, in my weekly visits, *all* your *families.* This desire is not prompted by personal, selfish motives. It is true that *one* way in which the Mass. Sabbath School Society is sustained, without calling upon the churches and Sabbath schools for contributions for this purpose, is by the small income from the Well-Spring; and every new subscriber aids a little, as the *drop* helps to make the shower. But the great motive for wishing the Well-Spring taken in *every family* where any of you reside, is, that the way may be opened for me to *labor for your good.*

Some pastors have said, "it is their wish to introduce this paper into *every family* in their parishes, but they cannot succeed." Will not my young friends become *agents* in this work? If twenty copies can be sent to your school, the expense will be only *twenty-five cents* a copy! Cannot the brothers and sisters of every family, unite in *earning* or *saving* twenty-five cents to pay for a paper *every week?* We urge this by the *special request* of some of your pastors. They wish me to come into *all* of their families, every week, and *assist* them in watching for your souls. Shall their wishes and my own be granted?

But lest this may not be permitted, in the case of *some* of you, allow me now, in closing this address, to give you a word of exhortation.

Give heed to the instructions of your parents, your ministers, and your teachers. Honor and obey your parents; be kind to one another; love the Bible, the Sabbath, the Sabbath school, the sanctuary, the people of God, and above all things, love the Saviour, and keep all his commandments. Then you will grow in favor both with God and man. You will be a blessing in this world, and shine as a star in the world to come. That you may give heed to this exhortation, and that this may be your happy end, is the prayer of your sincere friend, THE EDITOR.

TRIBUTE TO FAITHFUL TEACHERS.

Read to the Mason Street Sabbath School, Boston, Sabbath morning, Dec. 14, 1845, and furnished for the Congregational Visiter. After some remarks on the subjects of Death and the Judgment, the writer proceeds:

And particularly are we called to these solemn thoughts, by the recent and lamented deaths of those formerly and recently connected with our school, and whose interest in it remained undiminished to the end.

I refer, in the first place, to the decease of the Hon. Thomas A. Davis—our late Mayor—who for some time was a judicious and most acceptable teacher among us. Also to the departure of Mrs. Ann B. Ackerman, whose two lovely daughters were connected for many years with our school, and who both died happy in the love of their divine Saviour.* In my visits to Mrs. Ackerman, recently, and at the latest periods of her daughters' sickness and death, she always ex-

* For an account of one of these daughters, see "A Superintendent's Offering," published by the Mass. Sabbath School Society.—EDS. OF VIS.

pressed the liveliest interest in our school, and undoubtedly ascribed much of the serenity and joy of her daughters, in the prospect of death, to the faithful instructions they had received from their teachers here. One of them, a teacher herself, when she died, discovered her interest in the class she taught by leaving directions for a neat pocket Bible to be presented to each of them, and dictated a few words to be written on a blank page in each, expressing her sincere affection toward the scholar. As an additional evidence of the mother's, Mrs. Ackerman's, regard for us, she sent me, the last winter, after the sermon by the Rev. Mr. Todd, in our behalf, the sum of five dollars, being detained by sickness from enjoying the public exercise. And still further, in her will she has directed her executor to pay fifty dollars for the use of the school, as the last mark of her benevolent regards.

And now I am led to refer to another and more recent death—that of Jane B. Watson—whose name I cannot repeat but with the tenderest emotion. I need not tell the teachers present, nor many of the scholars, of the excellencies of this female. I see before me, among the teachers, that favored one who introduced Miss Watson into these seats, and who has shared ever since in her toils, her efforts, and her Sabbath school pleasures. Happy teacher! You will be associated with her yet again in a purer, better world, where all the labors of time will be rewarded through a blessed eternity.

For nearly ten years Miss Watson has been connected with Mason Street Sabbath School. It may be literally said of her, that she was truly a Dorcas, full of good works and alms deeds. Among the poor, "the cause which she knew not, she searched out." "Eyes was she to the blind, feet to the lame," and the widow and the fatherless found in her the sympathising, efficient and active friend. Those present, who have labored with her for years, will testify, I doubt not, to the truth of these remarks.

[In the course of her connection with this school, she has introduced between 30 and 40 scholars. How many of these at the great day will stand on the right hand of their Judge, and ascribe their salvation to the instrumentality of teachers in this school, must be left to the great revealing day! There were, probably, as many more that passed under her teaching in the same number of years, and they will testify to her faithfulness, her affectionate interest, and her efforts in every way to enlighten and to save the dear youth who were brought under her more immediate influence.]

The disorder which finally terminated her valuable life in its prime, was consumption—that subtle and flattering one which nips so early many of our fairest flowers, and only consoles us with the prospect of their being transplanted to a brighter region, where the frosts and storms of earth can never come. And this is, indeed, consolation. To have the assurance of our dear Saviour that he has taken them to himself, and will make them his companions for eternity,—this ought to compose our spirits, and repress every rising murmur, every unworthy emotion.

The nature of Miss Watson's disease—the remarkable progress it made, and a variety of peculiar circumstances attending it to the end, prevented her from saying much to the friends around her in regard to her dissolution. She had some strong ties to life, and if it had been consistent with God's designs, she would doubtless have wished to remain in his vineyard; but she asked for submission to his will, and no doubt in the sincerity of her heart, exclaimed, "Father, not *my* will, but *thine* be done."

Blessed be God, we need not the language of a death-bed, in this case, to give us a comfortable and animating hope, that though she is absent from us in body, she is present with the Lord,—taken to the bosom of Abraham, the father of the faithful, to be for ever employed in praising and adoring that Saviour whom she delighted to recommend to her young

friends on earth, and for whose entrance into heaven she will be continually looking with ardent, eager gaze.

My dear scholars,—those of you who enjoyed her instructions—*do not disappoint her. Plant your feet in the narrow way she pointed out, and finally partake her bliss.*

Teachers! we have a lesson, also, to us, most solemn and momentous. "If we have lost the *life* of our friend, let us not lose her *death*." Let us gird ourselves anew for the warfare in which we are engaged. Let us realize "where our great strength lies." Let us pray and labor like those who are serving the best of masters;

> "And when rivers and ocean no longer shall flow;
> When the world in commotion shall sever,
> Our souls will live on, from glory to glory,
> For ever,—and ever—and ever."

THE ASSEMBLY'S SHORTER CATECHISM.

Rev. James Morgan, of Belfast, England, in an Address on the "object of Sabbath school teaching," paid the following tribute to the Assembly's Shorter Catechism:

As an instrument for intellectual training, the shorter Catechism was next to the Scripture itself—no other mere human compilation was at all to be compared with it in this respect. He would pronounce it to be the most perfect and beautiful specimen of analysis ever presented to the mind of the English reader. It proclaimed the sublimest truths in language at once plain, forcible, and eloquent; and their familiarity with it would enable them to fill up the rude sketch of its design and execution, which he would now present to them.

That Catechism opened with the sublime but simple sentence, "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever." That announcement made, it condescended upon the rule necessary to gain the end in view—the Word of God. Attention was then fixed upon what it required man to believe, and what it required him to do—and they were

to mark, that the grand division of the entire Catechism was into these two parts. The former began with God, and then proceeded to point out his being, perfections, unity, godhead, decrees, and works.

Having arrived at his works, a fresh starting point was furnished, and these were traced in creation, providence, and redemption—landing upon the work of redemption—the discussion of that mighty theme occupied the whole sequel of the Catechism. This part of it began with man's need of redemption; then it showed that it had its origin in the bosom of God the Father, and was executed by the Son as Redeemer. It then described the Redeemer, his person and offices, and related the history of his humiliation and exaltation. After doing this, it introduced the way in which a sinner was interested in the work of redemption—namely, by the Spirit originating faith in the soul, and enabling it to come to Christ, producing effectual calling, with the justification, adoption, and sanctification, which followed—the blessings which accompanied these in time, and were consummated at death and the resurrection. Thus they were presented with an analysis of what man was required to believe; that was followed with what he ought to *do*, in an exposition of the ten commandments; and the Catechism was concluded with the *way of salvation*, by faith and repentance, and the *means of grace*—namely, the word, sacraments, and prayer.

He would say then to the Sabbath school teacher, there was a complete instrument for accomplishing the object of the intellectual training of his class. Let him put the Catechism into the hands of his pupils, and cause those more advanced to endeavor to trace the line of connection between the various subjects which it embraced, to see the links of the doctrines which it promulgated, and the duties it enforced, and thus they would be led on to a high state of intellectual advancement.

The Address then proceeds to describe the higher object of the Sabbath school—the *conversion of souls.*

"MY TEACHER IS LIKE A CLOCK."

BY EPHRAIM HOLDING.

As I like to see the cloud that is to fertilize the earth, lit up with a sunshiny edge, so do I love the sober lessons of wisdom and instruction to be relieved with occasional cheerfulness. A teacher that does not, now and then, put a smile into the faces of his scholars, may be an excellent man, and act with excellent intentions, but he is neglecting that which will help him and his scholars up many a steep hill, and ease them from many a heavy load.

"My teacher is like a clock," said a boy to me the other day, as I talked to him about his Sabbath school.

"Like a clock!" said I, affecting to look very grave, "why a clock strikes, but I hope your teacher does not strike you?"

"No, no!" said he, "that is not what I mean."

"Not what you mean," I replied, "then what is it that you mean? Do you mean that his face, like that of a clock, is always staring at you?"

"No, no! I do not mean that neither," was the reply.

"Do you mean then," said I, "that he is always pointing at the figures around him, with his finger?"

"No, no!" said my little friend, perceiving that I was only affecting not to understand him. "You know what I mean; I mean that he *keeps time* like a clock."

"Oh, oh!" replied I, "that is what you mean, is it? I am very glad to hear so excellent an account of your teacher." So saying, I endeavored to interest him by talking a little about clocks, and then brought my remarks to bear on the subject of Sabbath schools, and Sabbath school teachers and scholars. Being tolerably successful with him, hardly can I do better than to pursue the same course with you. And here I would remark, that as Sabbath school teachers,

you will do well, whatever may be the subject which occupies your attention, to obtain what knowledge you can on the point, and to form clear views concerning it. Of a certain celebrated preacher it is said, that whatever might be the subject on which he spoke, he seemed thoroughly to understand it. If he discoursed of armies, you might have supposed him, once, to have been a general; and if of the discipline of a soldier, that, at some former period of his life, he had performed the duties of a drill sergeant. When he reasoned, you felt that you were in the presence of a philosopher; and when he spoke of any trade, he seemed as much at home as if he had served an apprenticeship to the occupation. This habit or practice of obtaining knowledge on the things which come before you, and of forming clear and just conceptions thereon, will, in time, become extremely pleasant, add much to the estimation in which you may be held, and greatly assist you in communicating instruction. Water, when we have thirst, and food when we have an appetite, are scarcely more pleasant than information, when we are hungering and thirsting after knowledge.

A clock, as you know, is meant to make manifest the hour, or period of time, of the day or night. The sun in the skies, and the dial in the open air, serve this purpose tolerably well during the day when we are abroad, but as we want to know the hour when the sun does not shine, when we are within doors, and during the night, so clocks and watches are very useful and important inventions. . . . . .

Having dwelt a little on clocks, let me come back again to the remark of my little friend, "My teacher is like a clock!"

I cannot tell how this subject may affect you, but for myself, I could hide my face with both hands, when I think how little I have been like a clock in the world. Instances without number, seem to rush on my remembrance, all open mouthed, to accuse and condemn me—broken engagements!

neglected appointments! five minutes too late here, ten minutes there! and half an hour, or an hour yonder! It is absolutely frightful to look back on such a throng of errors—such a catalogue of carelessness with regard to time.

And is it true that diamonds are worthless, compared to the sands that run so rapidly through the hour-glass of our lives? Is it true that every misused moment is an offence against ourselves, and that

> "The spirit walks of every day deceased,
> And smiles an angel, or a fury frowns?"

How then can we think so lightly of the proper and improper apportionment of our time? For a man to be in one place, when his duty requires him to be in another, and to spend that time on himself, which being promised to another, is not his property, is not acting honestly. I was once five minutes too late for the steamer that was to bear me across the British channel, and those five minutes cost me two days time, and two days expense at a hotel before I could proceed. Again I say, that I could hide my face when I think on my past inattention and irregularity.

But now, as I have not spared myself, let me act a part equally faithful towards you. Either you are faulty, with regard to an attention to time, or you are not. If the latter, my remarks will not reach you, and if the former, you stand in need of a little castigation. Do you, then, keep time like a clock?

He who keeps a dozen persons waiting for him five minutes, has squandered an hour and five minutes, for we must reckon not the time lost by himself only, but that lost by each of those whom he has hindered, which added to his own, will make up the amount I mention. Then comes the bad example set to others, which if followed, greatly increases the evil; so that a Sabbath school teacher who does not keep time like a clock, but on the contrary is very irregular and very backward, does incalculable mischief, and as effectually

hinders the progress of his scholars, as he would if they were running a race, and he were to lay hold of their jackets and pull them back.

What think you would be the reply, if one of your scholars were to be asked whether you were punctual or not in your attendance at school? Would he say, like my little friend, "My teacher is like a clock?" or would his reply be of a different kind? Be assured that irregularity and backwardness in a Sabbath school teacher, is a sad, a very sad error. Useless, however, would it be for a doctor to talk about the disease of a patient, and not go on to prescribe a remedy. And equally unavailing will it be on my part to censure a fault in a Sabbath school teacher, and not do my best to correct it. If then any one of my readers should really have fallen into the error of not keeping time like a clock, in an attendance at his Sabbath school, let him read with care the following remarks.

To me it appears that the failing of our not being punctual with regard to time, proceeds altogether from a too low estimate of the value of time, and that the correction of the evil must be by raising this estimate to its proper standard. Let me try to make this plain. If any one of you were to pick up what you regarded as a pebble stone, the care you would take of it would be small. Whether you kept it in your hand or flung it away, would in your opinion be a matter of no importance whatever. But if any one on whose judgment you could rely, were to assure you that what you took to be a pebble was a real diamond of great value, a very sudden change would take place both in your mind and in your conduct. There would be little inclination to carry your prize carelessly, and still less to fling it away. What I have said of the pebble stone is a mere fanciful case, but what I have signified by it with regard to time, is a real one.

That time which we often use as carelessly as if it were of no more value than a pebble, is a real diamond, or rather a

diamond is a pebble stone in comparison with it. "If," says one, "it be important to compute our time, how much more so to improve it; to give to every hour its proper occupation, and to let no portion be wasted of that which is so valuable. So to number our days, as to apply our hearts unto wisdom, and to employ our brief allotment of time on earth, in preparation for an endless life in heaven, is the indispensable obligation of every one, and happy is he who is enabled effectually to fulfil it."

Value time aright and you will never waste or misuse it. Consider whose gift it is! He who made the heavens and the earth, and the sea, and all that they contain, meted out your moments of time from the never-ending years of eternity. What God has given should be used to his glory, and never is he more glorified than when his creatures are made happy. The minds of your scholars are to be seriously impressed, and you know not at what moment they may be most accessible. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Suppose at the accessible season you are not at your post, and you lose the opportunity of being made a means in holy hands of duly impressing their minds! Not willingly would you take on yourselves such a responsibility.

When Baxter had lost a thousand pounds, which he had laid up for the erection of a school, he used frequently to mention the misfortune as an incitement to be charitable while God gives the power of bestowing, and considered himself as in some degree culpable, for having left a good action in the hands of uncertainty, and suffered his benevolence to be defeated for want of quickness and diligence.

I have acknowledged my errors, are you ready to admit yours, that we may mutually, with all good faith and sincerity, strive to amend? Take this subject into consideration—take it to your Bibles—take it to a throne of grace, that your

minds may be so open to conviction, and your hearts so strengthened in your future amended course, that should the question be put to any of your scholars, Is your teacher punctual at the school? the answer may be given promptly, and given with truth, "My teacher is like a clock!"

[*London*] *S. S. Teachers' Magazine.*

BERKSHIRE SABBATH SCHOOL SOCIETY.

There are connected with the Sabbath school society in the county of Berkshire, 27 schools. Twenty-one of these, from which returns have been received, embrace 382 teachers and superintendents, 2,893 scholars, of whom 685 are over 18 years of age; and 6,804 volumes. The number of hopeful conversions reported in all the schools, is fourteen, ten of which are in the school in South Marlboro'. There has more recently been a revival in Peru, in which there have been eighteen or twenty hopeful subjects of grace, all of whom are youth, and nearly all members of the Sabbath school. At the time the pastor communicated this intelligence, July 24th, all the cases of conviction, excepting one, were youth connected with the school.

The schools generally, report the existence of a good degree of interest. Some, however, complain of a lack of interest in them, on the part of some members of the churches. There seems to be a fault here in most of the schools. Parental influence, and the influence of the adult portion of the congregation, may be very great in giving efficiency and interest to a school. Children will much more cheerfully and faithfully study the Scriptures, if they can but see their parents engaged in the study of them.

"Our school," says the Pastor in Peru, "the last year has been more prosperous than for the two or three preceding years. The oldest parishioners, when at church, are uni-

form in their attendance on the Sabbath school. The several classes of them we call *Bible classes.* They set a noble example to the younger portion of the congregation. There is no revival, and yet the blessing of God has been upon us." The account of the revival referred to above, was given subsequent to this report.

"One of the most encouraging things," says the Pastor in Great Barrington, "in a Sabbath school, is, to have the members of the church, not otherwise connected with the school, form themselves into Bible classes, and thus by their example, show the children that they really attach a value to this institution. Parental influence should also be thrown around the Sabbath school like a strong wall."

Two years ago, a resolution was passed at Curtisville, making it the duty of all members of the church, to connect themselves in some way, with the Sabbath school. It did well for awhile, and the effect of it has not entirely passed away. The superintendent says, "the Well Spring has had a noble effect in keeping up an interest in the school. The concert for prayer in behalf of Sabbath schools, has had a very full attendance."

The school in Richmond reports an increase of interest, during the better part of the last season, and "one means of that increase of interest," it is said, "was the Well Spring."

Says the report of the school in Housatonic, "It requires strong faith in God to be a zealous and faithful Sabbath school teacher, month after month, with no visible signs of a blessing upon our efforts."

The superintendent of the Pittsfield school thus writes:— "We hold weekly teachers' meetings, for prayer and the study of our lessons. Our Pastor has met with us, and his familiar and instructive explanations of the lessons, have been highly beneficial both to teachers and scholars. These meetings have been more fully attended than formerly, and we consider them of vital importance to the prosperity of the

school. Every passing year furnishes evidences of the great value of Sabbath school instruction to the rising generation. Especially has its happy influences been seen on many who have been called away by death. In past years, we have been permitted to witness many instances of happy and triumphant deaths among those who have been connected with our school. During the past year, we have been called to part with two of our number, of the ages of 7 and 8, both of whom, during their sickness, talked much of the Saviour."

ARE YOU A SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHER?

We fear the following extract from an article under this head, in the September number of the London S. S. Teachers' Magazine, deserves the very *special* attention of *some* members of our churches. Will all church members give it an attentive perusal?

Perhaps you say, "There are enough of others to teach in the Sabbath school." There would not be enough—there would not be any, if all were like you. But this is a mistake; there are not enough of others. You are wanted. Some five or six children, of whom Christ has said, "Suffer them to come to me," may grow up without either learning or religion, unless you become a teacher. Are all the children in the place where you live gathered into the Sabbath school? Are there none that still wander on the Lord's day, illiterate and irreligious? Is there a competent number of teachers in the existing schools, so that more would rather be in the way than otherwise? I do not know how it is where you live, but where I live, there are boys and girls enough, ay too many, who go to no Sabbath school. It is only for a teacher to go out on the Sabbath, and he readily collects a class of children willing to attend; and where I reside, there are not teachers enough for the scholars already collected.—Some classes are without a teacher; and presently the children stay away, because they say they come to school, and there is no one to attend to them. He who said, "Suffer the

little children to come unto me, and forbid them not," knows this; and he knows who of "his sacramental host" might take charge of these children, and do not. They say every communion season, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" and the Lord replies, "Suffer the little children to come to me"—and there the matter ends.

I visited recently an interesting school, composed of adults and children. It is languishing now for want of teachers. There were present some twenty-five or thirty females, and only *two* female teachers. I wondered to see no more than two there, especially of those who were last at the cross and first at the sepulchre.

PROMINENT DEFICIENCIES AMONG TEACHERS.

[CONCLUDED FROM PAGE 226.]

A want of suitable preparation for their duties, on the part of teachers, is another evil resulting from the same cause. If Sabbath school teachers have incorrect or inadequate views of the dignity and importance of the station they occupy; if they do not realize in some good degree the vast influence they may exert upon the character and destiny of the youth committed to their charge, they cannot be expected to labor as they should to become suitably prepared in mind and heart for the faithful discharge of the high and holy duties devolving upon them. That many individuals engaged in Sabbath school instruction are greatly deficient in these respects, cannot be denied. We have ourselves witnessed in too many of the schools, proofs of incompetency and want of interest in those filling the station of teachers, too palpable and strong to allow us to doubt the fact. The lateness of the hour at which they arrive at the school—not unfrequently from fifteen minutes to half an hour after the time for its meeting—their very manner of entering the room—their looks—their conduct before their class—in short, their whole deport-

ment is sufficient evidence that they are not interested in their occupation; that they do not delight in the study of the Bible, or in communicating its truths to the young. While so many teachers retain this character, the moral and intellectual improvement of the children in our schools must necessarily be slow, and the institution must leave much of the work which it ought to accomplish, uncompleted.

Such are some of the evils resulting from the want of the proper qualifications in teachers.

THE POET'S ANSWER

TO A LADY'S QUESTION RESPECTING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS MOST DESIRABLE IN AN INSTRUCTRESS OF CHILDREN.

O'er wayward children wouldst thou hold firm rule,
And sun thee in the light of happy faces?
Love, Hope, and Patience—these must be thy graces,
And in thine own heart let them first *keep school!*
For, as old Atlas, on his broad neck places
Heaven's starry globe and there sustains it; so
Do these upbear the little world below
Of education—Patience, Hope, and Love!
Methinks I see them grouped in seemly show;
The straightened arms upraised—the palms aslope,
And robes that touching, as adown they flow,
Distinctly blend, like snow embossed in snow.
O part them never! If Hope prostrate lie,
Love too will sink and die.
But Love is subtle; and will proof derive,
From her own life, that Hope is yet alive;
And bending o'er with soul-transfusing eyes,
And the soft murmurs of the mother dove,
Wooes back the fleeting spirit, and half supplies:
Thus Love repays to Hope what Hope first gave to Love!
Yet haply there will come a weary day,
When, over-tasked at length,
Both Love and Hope beneath the load give way,
Then, with a statue's smile, a statue's strength,
Stands the mute sister, Patience, nothing loath;
And, both supporting, does the work of both! COLERIDGE.

FAITHFUL LABORS WILL NOT LOSE A REWARD.

It is of the highest importance, that parents and Sabbath school teachers should persevere in their efforts to promote the intellectual and spiritual improvement, and salvation of their children and those under their instruction. And they may be assured, if faithful, that their labor will not be in vain, but that in due time they will reap, if they faint not. Both the promises of God, and their fulfilment, afford the greatest encouragement to expect that sooner or later the blessing will be granted. God may hear and answer their prayers, and bless their efforts immediately.

Some years since, a very pious woman had a young female living with her. One morning, these words, "Feed my lambs," were forcibly brought to her mind. She thought them appropriate to herself in relation to this young person. Though much engaged in her work, she left it, took this youth with her to her chamber, prayed with her, and exhorted her to give her heart to Christ. She became much impressed. These efforts she continued for several hours, till the youth expressed a hope that she had submitted to Christ, and she afterwards gave evidence that her heart was then renewed.

Though seed lie buried long in dust,
It sha'nt deceive their hope;
The precious grain can ne'er be lost,
For grace insures the crop.

It may spring up after the sower is laid in the grave, and is sleeping in the dust. In a revival of religion, a woman more than ninety years of age, was hopefully converted, who was awakened by recollecting something said to her by her mother when she was a child. C.

"While parents are interesting their children in the salvation of the heathen, they are doing one of the best things they can do to lead those children to become Christians."

PRAYER ANSWERED AFTER DEATH.

The mother of the late Mrs. Wight, of Scituate, as we learned from a recent conversation with Rev. Mr. W., died, leaving her husband and all her eight children, impenitent. She was a devotedly pious woman, and her frequent and earnest prayers for her family, bore testimony to her deep anxiety for their spiritual welfare. Her prayers for her children were also accompanied with their faithful instruction.

These prayers that anxious wife and mother did not live to see answered; but they were strikingly answered after her death. Within a few years from that event, her *husband* and *seven* out of the eight children were hopefully converted, and united with orthodox churches; and three grand-children also became pious.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF BOOKS AND RENEWED APPLICATION.

A missionary in Johnson county, Missouri, under date Sept. 16, 1846, acknowledges a box of seven libraries, from the Massachusetts Sabbath School Society, and applies for a new donation.

He heard of the arrival of the box about the last of April. He had *seventeen* appointments in each month, which left him but little time for his Sabbath school arrangements. And yet he was enabled to finish the *organization of six schools*, by the last of May! He says, "I have 'done what I could' to put the donations of our Christian friends in the way of doing good. In the six schools now in operation, there are 533 volumes of bound books, and 377 numbers of the Well-Spring in constant reading.

I desire through you, to render my sincere thanks to the Massachusetts Sabbath School Society, for the confidence they have placed in me, as their agent in distributing

their charity in the far West. Also, I am requested to present to the Society the thanks of the schools, both parents, and teachers, and scholars, for the libraries deposited among them.

I am advancing far into the evening of my life. My desire is to work on, and to be found at my post when called home.

There have been a number of inquiries for libraries since the above schools have been in operation. I would therefore *renew* my solicitations for more libraries for the far West. Could our friends have witnessed some of the scenes at the organization of the schools—when I lectured from the first seven verses of the 78th Psalm, and when I read your letter, informing them how these books were obtained, while parents, and children, and strangers, looked on more books than they had seen at one time before in all their lives—could they be made sensible of the effects of their Christian charity on the interests of the rising generation, I am sure they would cause the stream to become *perennial.* I therefore request more libraries."

BRIEF HINTS TO SCRIPTURE TEACHERS.

The September number of the London Teachers' Magazine, contains the following judicious hints to Scripture Teachers, by the Rev. C. R. Alford, of Doncaster. We commend them to all teachers and readers of the Bible.

1. In reading Scripture, always examine the context of a passage. Never build important doctrines upon abstract clauses; numbers in ignorance and carelessness do this, and thereby greatly injure the cause of truth. Read the whole passage, or parable, or discourse, and read it carefully; examine the connection of its every part, and so will you best understand its plain and obvious meaning.

2. Compare Scripture with Scripture; not only the text

with the context, but with passages of similar import throughout the Bible. Thus you will find the New Testament explain the Old, and the Epistles the Gospels, in a very striking manner. For this purpose let me recommend to you Bibles with marginal references, which form a very valuable commentary of Scripture upon Scripture.

3. Nor neglect the labors of pious men. There is a right and a wrong way of using a commentary: some neglect the advantages such works afford, in pride and folly; and others depend too greatly upon their instructions. Perhaps the best way of using a commentary, is first to read the chapter carefully—diligently comparing the text with the context, and Scripture with Scripture—and then turn for explanation or correction to those who are wiser and better than yourselves.

4. Read the Bible for yourselves. It speaks to *you*—to you as though it spoke to none beside—to teach you, to warn you, to encourage you, to bring you to Jesus Christ for pardon and grace; and thus read your Bible with prayer for the enlightening, converting, sanctifying grace of the eternal Spirit. Remember the natural man is blind and dead to spiritual things, and it is the Spirit that quickens and applies the word.

5. Let your instruction be distinctively Scriptural instruction. The object of Sabbath schools is to teach Scripture history, Scripture doctrine, Scripture precept as connected with the salvation of the soul, not to teach writing and reading, and secular knowledge. Nor think yourselves competent to instruct your class in any passage of Scripture without previous meditation, and study, and prayer. First, read the passage—mark, learn, and inwardly digest it for yourselves; make yourselves complete masters of it in all its bearings, and then teach it in as lively a way as you are able to your class. Thus, then, as Christians, and as Sabbath school teachers, study the Scriptures.

When thus you read God's word, how will you learn to love it! What great things will it do for you! How will it convert, and save, and bless you; once darkness, but now light in the Lord; once dead in sin and guilt, and awaiting eternal destruction, now alive to God and eternity, pardoned and the heir of endless bliss! What new creatures does God's word make all who truly believe its record. Suffer me to inquire (surely the question can never be out of place), has the Bible made you a new creature? Unconverted persons scoff at such a question. They have read the book occasionally, they have heard it read and preached from; but there they are at this moment, living in sin, without hope and without God in the world. The Bible is to convert the soul, and if it has not done this for you, it has as yet done *nothing* for you to any saving purpose. And why not? Why has it been blessed of God to the conversion and salvation of thousands and tens of thousands in every land and every age —perhaps of the children whom you teach—and why has it not converted you? Let me faithfully answer that question; because you have not faith; because you love sin and live in sin, whatever that sin may be. O! turn with full purpose of heart from every evil way; take the Scriptures as a lamp in a dark world—your guide in life, your hope in death. Try it; see what the Bible, rightly used, can do for you—how happy, how holy, how blessed it can make you; and soon with the Psalmist will your grateful confession be, "O, how love I thy law, all the day long is my study in it."—"Thy word is tried to the uttermost, and thy servant loveth it."

"I wonder how many hours of the Sabbath are devoted to the instruction of children, by those parents who make the necessity of attending to the religious culture of their families, an apology for not entering the Sabbath school."

PAINFUL.

There is a teacher who has but two scholars in his class today. He sits in the middle of the seat with the Bible closed before him, perfectly silent. On the right is a lad six or eight years of age, as far removed from the teacher as the seat will allow, with his face turned from him. On the left sits another of the same age at the other extremity of the seat playing with a string, making curious knots. All seem to be waiting to hear the bell ring, which to them is a signal of release. The rest of the class are absent, perhaps standing about the door, preferring liberty to such restraint. Has that teacher nothing to say? Does he know that the minds and hearts before him are more susceptible than at any period of life, and that should he make a good impression, its effects might be as lasting as eternity? Does he know that an impression will be made by his silence and coldness, which will be as lasting for evil, perhaps the ruin of that soul? Could angels be silent with such an opportunity to do good? Will not a half hour thrown away, be found in his account at the final reckoning? Brother, awake! Why sit idle when there is so much to do? Do you wish the children committed to your care, to be saved? Who believes it? Who can believe it? What evidence is there of it? Go, confess your indifference to your master—to your children. Let them see that you have a heart, large, generous, and full of sympathy, and they will gather around you to hear the words of eternal life. But how shall they hear without one to speak? Your silence is painful.—*S. S. Treasury.*

"The rose is sweetest when it first opens, and the spikenard root when the herb dies. Beauty belongs to youth and dies with it, but the color of piety survives death and perfumes the tomb."

THE

CONGREGATIONAL VISITER.

NO. 12....DECEMBER, 1846....VOL. III.

CONGREGATIONAL VISITER.

With this number the third volume of the Congregational Visiter closes; and the Committee avail themselves of this opportunity, to commend this work anew to the patronage of the churches and Sabbath schools for whose benefit it was established.

If it has been the means of promoting, in any degree, the Sabbath school cause, or of exerting a good influence upon the minds of its readers, let God be praised. If it has, for any reason, or in any measure, failed to realize the expectations of its patrons, the failure will be a subject of deep regret, and a stimulus to increased effort in future to remove all defects, and to make it, what from the outset it was designed to be, a valuable auxiliary to those who are directly engaged in Sabbath school instruction, and a profitable visiter to the firesides of all classes in our religious community.

It is obvious that the Visiter has to share the patronage of the public with many religious periodicals; and some persons may regard the times as demanding a reduction of the number. But the Committee feel an increasing conviction

that this humble and unpretending publication is needed, and should be sustained. There is none that can occupy its place, or accomplish its great end. It is needed by the Society as an organ of frequent communication with the churches which it represents, and whose interests it is laboring to promote; and on account of the greater prominence and publicity which is thus given to its operations. It is needed by the community, on account of the good influence which it is obviously adapted to exert upon the Sabbath school cause among the churches of our denomination.

Under this impression, the Committee are disposed to continue the Visiter; and they earnestly invite Pastors, Superintendents, and Teachers of Sabbath schools, and members of the Congregational churches generally, to cooperate with them in sustaining this work, and in rendering it more extensively useful than it has heretofore been. The Visiter will be under the same editorial management as during the present year; and no pains will be spared, either by the Editors or the Committee, to meet the wishes, and realize the expectations of the friends of the Society.

While it will continue to be, as it has been, a prominent object to render as much assistance as possible to Pastors, Superintendents, and Teachers, in the work of Sabbath school instruction, the wants of others will not be neglected. Well written articles upon important practical subjects will here find a place; and while the FAITH once delivered to the saints will be zealously maintained, the ORDER delivered to us by our fathers, will be occasionally exhibited and defended. In a word, while this work is not designed to be controversial, it will be a CONGREGATIONAL VISITER, which may be safely and profitably circulated among all who desire to perpetuate the institutions of the Puritans.

The cover, a matter of little consequence comparatively, but of sufficient importance to deserve a single remark, will

be rendered much more valuable both to the Society and to the subscribers. By a change which will sufficiently explain itself when it is seen, several pages can be added without increasing the expense. These additional pages will be filled with descriptive notices of the Society's Publications, and such other matter as the Editors may deem of interest to the subscribers.

With these remarks the Visiter is commended to the patrons of the Society, in the confident hope that they will welcome it as a necessary auxiliary, and use their exertions and their influence to give it a wide and a permanent circulation.

SABBATH SCHOOL CONCERT.

A TEACHER'S LETTER TO HER CLASS.

My beloved Seven:—I feel it to be a peculiar privilege that I have just that number committed to my trust—that it was God's favorite number, who can doubt, that reads his Bible with attention—and I look upon my little flock every Sabbath, with a deeper feeling of love—a sense of the honor of being a teacher of souls, and a solemnity of the trust, enhanced by the thought—they are seven! And shall I be so blest above, as to gaze upon those dear faces radiant with angelic beauty, which are now turned to me with affection and confidence, for instruction in heavenly things?

I thank God, he has listened to the prayer of parental love, which was strengthened by those of many others who felt a deep interest in your salvation, and has set his divine seal of acceptance on five of my little band—that we welcome from among you, new members to the church of Christ, at our next sacramental season.

Let us all fervently pray that our dear Marion and

Ellen may not long be absent from that soul-strengthening feast. My faith is unshaken for you; for you are children of the *baptismal covenant*, and as such are objects of interest in heaven. The angels look upon every baptism with infinite joy; "another flower-plant," say they, "set in the garden of earth, to be transplanted to our home, when the Lord hath need to beautify his paradise;" and ofttimes it *is* transplanted long before the seed time—perhaps before the budding!

Our relation has now subsisted for three years, and many changes have we beheld in that brief period. We will not awaken the intensity of past grief, by alluding to them. Of *this* year alone, will we speak—these twelve happy months, which we cannot follow to their burial, without tears of gratitude for all the blessings they have brought!

Let us thank God for all his gifts; first of all, for our pastor, through whose faithfulness, salvation has come to more than one soul in our midst! and oh! what a gift is a renewed heart!

Yes, let us thank God daily upon every remembrance of our pastor. Let us pray that his life may be prolonged, and his watchfulness continue to be felt in the Sabbath school, as well as in the church, and we be blest by his presence and counsel. The wonderful prosperity of our school, we owe in a great degree to his vigorous supervision, and his unabated interest. No! we must never forget our pastor in our prayers—we are deep in his debt for spiritual benefits.

For the tie that unites *us*, for the love He has implanted in our hearts for each other, we thank our Father in heaven; and that death has but once entered our ranks since the new year dawned—then he came like a friendly angel, when the beautiful and pure-hearted sank to her rest. That day of holy and glorious memories is em-

balmed in my heart; should the pen ever have them in keeping, I will give them to the world and to you.

I feel grateful that I can testify to the strength of purpose you have manifested through this year; and that many of the resolutions made at its commencement, you have truly, nobly kept. Always remember, my dear young friends, that of your own power, you are not sufficient for one day's faithful fulfillment of a promise made to God—your own heart—or your neighbor. Let humility, therefore, accompany every purpose of your soul.

For your faithful attendance at the Sabbath school, I owe you *my* gratitude; for the well prepared lesson has evidenced careful study and diligent research. The frequent question has betokened the reflecting mind, and how have I inwardly thanked God when it betrayed the disquietude of an awakened conscience, which the Holy Spirit alone could soothe and instruct.

My gratitude is yours, for the sweet kindness with which you have all welcomed me to your homes, and made your teacher a friend at your fireside; many delightful hours of social intercourse have grown out of our Sabbath relation.

I thank you that my counsels have all been received in the spirit I most wish to see—that of *improvement.* Christ hath said, "It is more blessed to *give*, than to receive." This have you proved, my little band, and many of earth's children will thank you for the sweet charities of your heart and hand. Never let the appropriation you have thus early accustomed yourselves to make, be suspended. God will always aid those *who love to give.* It is his own boundless generosity—his infinite love, which embraces the whole earth, secures to us his sympathy in our desire to do good. He loves to see his image reflected. His kind providence will often cause the stipulated sum to come into your possession, when you least expect it.

Therefore give—give to the poor—to the sufferer—to the heathen abroad, and the heathen at home; for in too many places in our lovely land, are found minds on which the light of the gospel has never shone. Send the sacred Word far and wide; it takes but little, thank God, in these days, to purchase a Bible; and even the most isolated portion of the holy seed can make a paradise of earth's most desolate plain. Therefore labor to do good. Seek to deny yourselves in some one thing that *will be* a self-denial: the offering will be more precious.

Remember your influence in every hour. Around each of you are moving those whose happiness is increased by the sunshine of your spirit: perfect peace in the soul, is the best security for the government of our temper—and this gift belongs to them whose minds are stayed on God. To those of you, particularly, who have taken the name of Christ on your lips, wearing the badge of fellowship with his church, I would say with earnestness—*take care of your temper.* It is the bitterest foe with which many a Christian has to struggle; therefore, *now*, in the beginning of your course, inscribe this motto on your heart, with fervent prayer for power to obey its principle—"He that ruleth his own spirit, is better than he that taketh a city!" It will be one of the surest proofs of your adoption into the church of the redeemed and sanctified, that you fulfill this precept.

And now the Invisible Hand is again closing the outer portal of Time's great temple! How many are sweetly sleeping in Jesus, who once trod its aisles with us! On the veiled altar of the past, within its walls, is laid another volume—the records of the human heart—the soul's earthly life! My dear young friends, my fellow worshipers in Time's sanctuary, what have we inscribed on the imperishable pages of that book? I weep to think of all we would efface! That fearful thought—that we

cannot efface the past—must make us walk with diligent feet through the paths of the future; we must walk with God—so shall we fulfill all righteousness—so shall we, being justified by faith, have peace with him, through our Lord Jesus Christ, who will strengthen and guide us through our earthly pilgrimage, and finally welcome us to that upper temple, where all tears shall be wiped from our eyes, and death shall separate us no more!

Daylight is fading from the beautiful scenery before me—the purple tints linger still on the mountains, and the river reflects on its placid waters the golden clouds which float above them—would that each of you could dwell with me awhile, amid the influences by which I am surrounded both in nature and heart! The affection yielded me here, makes me unspeakably rich—grateful to my friends, and to Him from whose bounty my cup hath been filled with gladness!

Absent from you for a short period, I shall return with fresh zeal to my duties. Think of me, when, as our custom is, the rich notes of Hamburg swell from the organ and the voice, as our school separates in the last Sabbath of 1846. There is a mingled majesty and tenderness in that tune, which renders it peculiarly appropriate for that solemn season.

Now, my dear children, adopt with me, at the close of the day and the year, that beautiful thought of the poet—

> "Thou art, oh Christ, my rest! within thine arms,
> Glad as the setting sun, may I decline—
> Baptized from earthly stains, from death's alarms,
> Immortal rise, in thy new heavens to shine!"

Prayerfully and affectionately,

Your Teacher, M. R. T.

MODE OF CONDUCTING THE PUBLIC EXERCISES OF THE S. S.

The Committee of the Sabbath School Teachers' Association, of Cincinnati, close their Report,—from which we have already published several articles on the "Prominent Deficiencies among Teachers,"—by referring to the "*want of judgment in conducting the public exercises of the school;*" and to "the *great cause* of all the defects in Sabbath schools."

One other evil which we have observed in some of our largest and best established schools, is the *want of good judgment in conducting the public exercises of the school.*

Some superintendents, with the best intentions, but as it seems to us injudiciously, protract the opening or closing exercises to too great a length by long addresses, or long prayers, or tedious repetitions, all of which are wearisome to the children, and take from the time which the teachers should have for direct instruction to their classes. The addresses and prayers too, are often made by strangers visiting the school, and are but poorly adapted to the capacities of the scholars, or the peculiar wants of a Sabbath school. The prayers and remarks addressed to the school should (we think) be *simple*, *direct* and *brief*—such as the pupils can *understand*, and uttered in such a distinct tone that they will be likely to *remember* them. And we cannot but think that, as a general rule, a few remarks or questions upon the lesson for the day, by the superintendent, pastor, or a capable teacher, is much preferable to an address from some stranger happening to step in, which *may* be good enough, but will often prove to be dull, tedious, or inappropriate to the occasion. For want of attention to these things, scholars and teachers often become wearied with the exercises, and imbibe a dislike to them; and the solemnity and good order of the school is destroyed.

THE GREAT CAUSE OF ALL DEFECTS IN SABBATH SCHOOLS.

The *great cause* of all the defects existing in Sabbath schools is, doubtless, the want of a due appreciation of the dignity and importance of the work in which they are engaged, and consequently an imperfect preparation for it on the part of teachers. The standard of qualifications for Sabbath school teaching is placed far too low, even by many true friends of this institution. The great requisites for a faithful discharge of its duties—a well disciplined mind, intelligence, a diligent study of the Scriptures, warm piety, active faith, and a love for the occupation—are possessed by but few Sabbath school teachers as they should be. The duties of the school are made to yield to personal convenience, and to other engagements, and are to be attended to as a *secondary matter.* * * * * Against such course we most earnestly protest, for while it is pursued, the Sabbath school will never take the place it should. * * * * The Sabbath school enterprise, in dignity, and importance, and capabilities for extensive usefulness, yields to no other; and until its friends claim that place for it which it should occupy, and strive to elevate its character and extend its usefulness, it will never succeed in gaining the confidence of the Christian community or the world, or in fulfilling all the expectations which they have formed in regard to it.

RESPONSIBILITY OF PARENTS.

God has given parents great power over their children. In the tenderest and most confiding moments of existence, parents can mould and shape their destinies. From the first hour of existence, children feel that influence. The food that is eaten—the exercise taken—the disposition, the temper of the parent, is to exert upon the future and eternal destiny of the child, a powerful, a never-ceasing influence. As great as the power is that parents possess, so great is their responsibility. He who says to them, "Take this child and nurse it for *me*, and I will pay thee thy wages," will also say, "Give an account of thy stewardship."

Parents are without excuse, if they do not the will of God in relation to their children. Upon no subject has God spoken so frequently, so plainly. Promises, lasting as time, are offered to those who bring up their children in the fear of God; curses that touch the fourth generation and run over into eternity, are threatened to those who disregard God's commands in respect to the young. No parent can delegate this responsibility to another. No instruction can take the place of that which belongs to the parent. As you would not trust a stranger to mix and administer the medicine necessary to raise up your child from a bed of sickness, so you are not to trust a stranger to make the first, the most enduring impressions upon its immortal mind. Send your children to Sabbath school, but add, that most powerful of all, the instruction of home. Know not only that their lessons are learned, but know also what those lessons are. If in any degree erroneous, correct them; if right, confirm them. Juvenile depravity abounds—children, as of old, "go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies." The harvest is ripe. Bad men are shouting it

home. Our hope is in God, and in the power of home instruction. Parents must awake and act—learn God's will, and do it. They must train up their households in his fear, and guide by example, as well as by command. Parents need more *principle* in relation to their children; more religious dependence; more solemn prayer to God for wisdom and grace to guide them. Such consecration will be owned of God. In the last day, at the bar of God, faithful fathers and mothers will be able to say, "Behold us, and the children thou hast given us." M. H. S.

THE DEACON'S FIRESIDE.

NUMBER THREE.

It was Monday evening. Mr. Jones called at Deacon Oldschool's, to get the loan of certain articles for the following day. The Deacon was rather slow in giving an answer, as he wished to draw him into conversation on another subject. Instead of giving him his answer in full, and allowing him to depart, as it was evident he desired to do, he gave him an answer in part, and remarked, "We had a good sermon yesterday,—one that was adapted to rouse us to our duty."

Mr. Jones. Well, I don't know but he had a little more life than usual. There was need enough of it.

Dea. O. It is certainly time that we were revived. Four communion seasons have now passed, and not one has been added to the church from the world.

Mr. J. Yes, it is pretty plain the church will run out, unless things take a different turn.

Dea. O. The fact that none are added to the communion of the church, is not the only cause of grief. The state of the church itself,—of the individual members of it, is another cause. We are in a backslidden state. Our

prayer meetings are but thinly attended, and so is the preparatory lecture, and monthly concert. Family prayer is, I fear, a good deal neglected, and the manner and bearing of many of us is such as to render it difficult for men to determine who are professors of religion, and who are not.

Mr. J. They were talking about it over at the public house the other day; I heard some one say that he believed he should stay in, on some communion day, to find out who are church-members.

Dea. O. There is a sad state of things when such remarks are made, or when occasion is given for such remarks. We are verily guilty in this matter: I speak for myself, as well as for others.

Mr. J. I have never heard any complaint about you. I don't think you need to be concerned about it.

Dea. O. I need to be concerned about every thing that affects the cause of Christ—more so than any thing which affects my own character or interest, and I hope I am, generally. I am concerned that I have not done more to prevent the church from getting into its present state. I might have prayed more, and been more watchful over myself and my brethren.

Mr. J. I think you have done your duty. There are a good many who don't like to be exhorted too much, though they will bear more from you than any one else. The state of the church is not your fault.

Dea. O. Each individual member is, indeed, responsible for the state of his soul; still we all owe duties to each other, which we may fail to perform. If my brother is in a backslidden state, he is to blame for it, and I also may be to blame for not having done more to keep him out of it.

Mr. J. It is pretty hard for a church to keep up to the mark, unless they have some one to lead them. If they have dull preaching, they will be dull Christians. The

gospel is the great thing: if the gospel is not preached, or preached only in a dull way, the church must languish, and there is no help for it, as I know of.

Dea. O. We can't set too high an estimate on the preaching of the gospel, but the gospel is preached that we may believe and obey it. Our part, that of believing and obeying, is not to be thrown on the preacher. You would make the impression that you thought the church is not to blame for backsliding, if she has not the advantage of lively preaching. Now I think, that with the Bible in her hands, she would be to blame for backsliding, if she had no preaching at all.

Mr. J. You may be correct in theory, but I go by facts. I know that churches never do flourish under such preaching as we have.

Dea. O. I can't agree with you. I can't think our present state, as a church, is owing to the preaching. I have wondered that our minister could preach with as much heart as he has all along, and we all asleep around him. The sermon last Sabbath was a very searching one. I felt it. I felt guilty under it. I felt as though I could not be a Christian, unless I had more feeling and did more for Christ.

Mr. J. I don't remember exactly about the sermon yesterday. I believe I did think he had waked up a little. He must wake up more yet, before he can rouse the people.

Dea. O. Suppose every member of the church had spent a part of the morning, last Sabbath, in prayer for the minister and for himself, and had gone to meeting prepared to join in the devotional exercises earnestly, and then fixed his attention upon the sermon, and tried to see how much good he could get from it, and turned every sentence into a prayer, don't you think the effect of the sermon would have been much greater than it was?

Mr. J. Yes, I suppose it would; but then you can't expect a congregation are going to be at all that trouble.

Dea. O. It is no harder for a congregation, than it is for an individual. I know of some who do so, and they find it easy, and receive great delight and profit to their souls.

Mr. J. Why, if each one were to do all that, it would be doing about all the work. They might as well make the sermon and done with it. We pay the minister for doing that.

Dea. O. I think if every one were to do what I have mentioned, there would be still enough left for the minister to do, and for the Lord to do. But let us consider what your doctrine would lead to. You pay a man for preaching; if he preaches with power enough to keep the people, without any effort on their part, from sleeping in church, very well. If not, they are not to blame for sleeping. If he does not preach so as *to force* them to attend and to practice what he preaches, they are not to blame for neglecting these duties.

Mr. J. I would not say that exactly, but I think a minister ought to preach in an interesting way.

Dea. O. Very good; but then the power of a preacher to interest us, depends in a great measure upon ourselves. It is not enough for us to come within the sound of his voice, and throw ourselves down in our seats, and say, "Here we are, move us if you can." I believe we are as much bound to prepare for the sermon, and listen to it, as the minister is bound to prepare, or deliver it. If we can throw all the responsibility on the minister, if all or the most important duties can be done by proxy, we had better turn Romanists at once, and depend on the priest. My brother, I am afraid, nay I am sure you have mistaken views on this subject. We have duties in respect to the ordinances of the sanctuary, just as important as those

of the minister. It is his duty to preach the gospel. It is our duty to hear it, but hearing means something more than placing the ear within the reach of his voice. We are to go with the hearing ear, and this can be had only by previous reflection and prayer. We are to fix our attention upon the Word, and praying for grace to do so, and striving to keep away slumber and distracting thoughts. We are to notice each truth that is uttered. If it is one which we knew before, we are to pray that it may be blessed to our sanctification. If it is a new one, we are to thank God for it, and offer the same prayer respecting it. If a new duty is presented, we are to bless God for it, and pray for strength to perform it. We are to turn every sentence into a prayer, or connect prayer with every sentence. Now if this be done, there is no gospel sermon that will not be heard with interest and profit.

J. A.

"ASK, AND IT SHALL BE GIVEN."

'Tis meant for all, the humblest child
  May claim this boon of heaven,
And to each worshiper 'tis said,
  "Ask, and it shall be given."

Alone with God,—where seraphs bow,
  I too may find a place,
And by the eye of faith may see
  My Saviour face to face.

But what petition shall I bring,
  As now I bend the knee?
The burden of my evening prayer,
  Father, what may it be?

When thoughts arise of earthly joys,
  My lips refuse to speak;
Since broken cisterns these but prove,
  A higher good I seek.

One precious charge, oh God, I have,
On thee I cast my care;
I bear a teacher's sacred trust,
Oh, hear a teacher's prayer.

Submissive help me to resign
Life's blessings as they pass,
Enough to know that thou wilt own,
And bless my Sabbath class.

Are they not near thy kingdom, Lord,
And hear they not the voice
Of him who died their souls to save,
Demanding now their choice?

Oh, may it be that better part,
That priceless gift of heaven,
The heart redeemed and sanctified,
The sins of life forgiven.

Impress us with this solemn truth,
That soon we all must meet,
Teacher and pupils then to stand
Before the judgment seat.

And when the scenes of earth are past,
Grant us a home in heaven;
The promise of our God, we plead,
"Ask, and it shall be given." M.

Charlestown, October, 1846.

DON'T GIVE UP THE SABBATH SCHOOL.

We have been informed,—says the editor of the New York S. S. Advocate,—of the case of a lovely and prosperous Sabbath school that has been broken up by dissensions among the teachers. They could not agree when to meet, whether in the morning or afternoon, and neither party being willing to yield to the views of the other, the school was abandoned. What a sad spectacle is here! How does Satan rejoice in such a scene, giving him, as it

does, occasion to "plunder Zion's nursery!" God will hold those teachers responsible for the ruin of souls through their unchristian strife. Both parties are to blame. Both ought to have yielded, or to have compromised their difference. What an easy method this would have been of preventing difficulty.

Union is power, and without union in a Sabbath school there is no power for good. Let all teachers follow peace and pursue it, in meekness preferring others before themselves. Above all things, avoid the formation of parties, and the indulgence of party spirit in a Sabbath school. Divisions will ruin any cause, but especially the cause of religion. Wo be unto him by whom the offence cometh!

WANT OF PUNCTUALITY.

"O dear," said a superintendent of a Sabbath school, as he was one Sabbath morning standing in the church where the school was held; "I am almost discouraged. I really don't know what course to pursue."

No wonder that the superintendent was discouraged. It was ten minutes after the stated time for commencing the school, and not one quarter part of the scholars had yet assembled. A few were seen scattered about in different parts of the building, but the number was very small. Even the teachers, with the exception of two or three, had not yet made their appearance, and for the next ten or fifteen minutes, there was a constant sound of feet treading the aisles, and of the opening and shutting of pew-doors; and even after the superintendent had waited a most unreasonable length of time for the members to assemble, and the scene to become quiet, an occasional lagger would intrude. One or two entered while a mem-

ber was engaged in prayer, and several arrived afterwards.

As the school was in the church, and must of necessity close when the time came for the congregation to assemble for public worship, the session was extremely short. It could not have exceeded half an hour.

Aside from the evil occasioned by this loss of half an hour, (it was the loss of a full half hour, because if the teachers and pupils had been punctual, the school would have remained an entire hour in session,) there were others of a serious character, produced by the confusion and disorder of the scene.

The deportment of the scholars was much less unexceptionable than it would otherwise have been. When they came into the school, some of the teachers were absent, and they would begin to talk to each other, and they would loll about in the pews, and once or twice, one boy, who sat near the pew where I was, came near laughing aloud.

The children lost their interest in their lessons by waiting so long to recite them. They seemed to become languid and spiritless, and to be indifferent about reciting well or otherwise.

The teachers were discouraged. Those who came late found their classes disorderly and inattentive, and those who were punctual were dispirited, and weary with waiting so long.

The superintendent, as was shown in the beginning, was anxious and disheartened. He had said a great deal about the importance of punctuality, and he was invariably punctual himself, but neither example nor precept seemed to produce any good effect.—*S. S. Treasury.*

CHOICE THOUGHTS FOR THE AFFLICTED.

I may look back on every sorrow past,
And meet life's peaceful evening with a smile—
As some lone bird, at day's departing hour,
Sings in the sunbeam of the transient shower,
Forgetful though its wings are wet the while.—*Bowles.*

To miss the good that may be got by suffering evil, is the worst of evils; to lose the gain which should be gotten by losses, is of all losses the greatest; but to grow worse by suffering evil, is perdition itself.—*Barnabas Oley.*

Where, in our sky, should we look for clouds?—Where it is the brightest, where our expectations are highest. Our sharpest sorrows arise out of our sweetest comforts.—*Cecil.*

Exercise in the open air; cheerful but holy conversation with Christian friends; a habit of dwelling on the luminous spots of life, by which our gratitude to God is enlivened, and our joy augmented; intercourse with God, in reading his blessed Word, and in the devotion of the closet; all conduce to the support and strength of the mind under suffering.—*Dr. Waugh.*

We all receive that kind of discipline which our peculiar dispositions require; and if it is severe, we may be sure it is necessary too.—*Jane Taylor.*

Whatever below God is the object of our love, will, at some time or other, be the cause of our sorrow.—*Cecil.*

The first practical effect of affliction, and the first token of its being sanctified to the believer, is, in many cases, a returning sensibility of conscience, whereby he is awakened, as if from a dream, to a lively recollection of many things, which before cost him no uneasiness, but on a review of which, he now feels humbled and abased.—*Dr. Gordon.*

J. H. T.

A WORD TO MINISTERS.

We have received a copy of an "Address to Christian Parents of the Churches in Vermont." This Address contains the following hint to ministers respecting their duties and responsibilities to the young.

Brethren, in the sacred office of the ministry, have *we* done what we could? Have we estimated and felt our responsibilities as we ought? Have our labors, in the pulpit and out of it, been conducted with sufficient reference to the good of our younger hearers, and their preparation to serve the "Lord of the harvest?" * * * * A minister should acquaint himself with the children of his charge, especially those of "the covenant," and know what their parents are doing for their spiritual good and fitness to serve Christ. It would do his own soul good, quicken parents in duty, and bless the souls of the young, if he would often preach to children especially. We are intellectually too high up in our pulpits, brethren, for the children of our congregations. We study, write, and preach in such a manner, that we overshoot their young minds. They come to public worship with their parents, and look to us for instruction. But what proportion of them feel that our instructions are designed for them? How much of our preaching do they understand, remember, feel and practice? If we did our duties for their benefit, as we ought, doubtless they would be some of our most attentive and profited hearers, and most affectionate and respectable parishioners; and as they grew up, our most efficient fellow laborers for our Lord and Master. We must more habitually and seriously consider our obligations to God concerning them; come down better to their comprehension; preach sermons, often, prepared especially for them; and often throw into our discourses paragraphs in which we will turn aside and apply the subject particularly to them. "*Children, attend!*" one of

the best ministers in our country would sometimes say, in the midst of a sermon, to his younger auditors; and thus he would rivet every eye upon himself, while addressing some things especially to them. We must also look through our Sabbath schools, and the families of our churches, for the young plants, which if properly trained may prove trees most fruitful in the garden of the Lord. A Jesuit, aiming to propagate the faith of his church, seeks with great assiduity to make his way into the hearts of children and youth; to gain their confidence and acquire influence over them. For the high and holy purpose which is placed before the true minister of the gospel, should *he* be most assiduous to attach to himself the children of his charge.

EPISTLES OF CHRIST TO SABBATH SCHOOLS.

The following remarks were written by one, who, while living, was an accomplished Teacher, and a devoted Christian, and now that she is among the blessed, doubtless rejoices in all efforts to promote the cause of Sabbath schools which she so greatly loved. She was an epistle that could be read with profit by old and young: may all Sabbath school Teachers remember that they are epistles of Christ, read every Sabbath day by their classes, and strive to resemble our friend in that purity and transparency of Christian character which is so necessary to their success.

"Ye are our epistles, written in our hearts, known and read of all men." 2 Cor. 3: 2.

Perhaps no text of Scripture might be made to exert a more direct and practical influence upon Christian character than this, were it only viewed in its true light—daily and prayerfully contemplated as a lamp to guide our souls to Jesus. If those who profess to be the followers of the Lamb, would themselves feel more deeply the importance of letting their light shine brightly before the world, they might hope for a clearer display of God's love in making them instruments to win souls for Christ.

In the first place, this beautiful apostolic precept is calculated to make us humble—for no real disciple of the Saviour can for a moment regard himslf as surrounded by those who are hourly looking to him for guidance in their heavenward path, without a deep and abiding sense of personal unworthiness. Yet if we look for a little season into this mirror of God's Word, we shall by the eye of faith, soon see depicted before us, not only a multitude who are walking with Jesus, but amid them some, perhaps, who shall yet arise in the judgment and call *us* blessed. Oh! what are we, that we should be thus honored? Not only to be numbered among the followers of Christ ourselves, but to be made instrumental of good to our fellow-pilgrims. Truly may we feel our need, when we contemplate the nature of our responsibilities; and, realizing our own insufficiency "for these things," plead for His aid, who has said, "As thy day, so shall thy strength be."

By a brief analysis of the apostle's language, we may probably glean more of its spirit, and reap encouragement to go forward. The holy man assumes the posture of a suppliant, and in the gentle tones of affectionate expostulation *pleads* with us, if not in direct terms, yet by an inference easily drawn. For who that is truly convinced of his past short-comings in duty towards those who constitute the little sphere in which he moves, *who* will not recognize the force of an appeal made to his conscience from the *example* of the primitive Christians? "Ye *are* our epistles," said St. Paul to the Corinthians. Could he say it to us? Can the ministers of God, whose instructions we are privileged to enjoy, bear witness sweet as this to our fidelity? Can the world around us drink in the very spirit and temper of Jesus, while they hold intercourse with us? Can they behold, written in living characters, the name of our Redeemer? Do they with-

draw from their occasional communion with us, only to add new testimony to the power of faith, only to record their evidence in favor of a religion which brings forth such fruit as we bear? Then happy are we, and the world shall be the better that we have lived in it.

But if no such results can be shown from our connection with society—if no voice of approval comes up to cheer us onward in our course as professing Christians—then have we cause to fear the day of reckoning—to dread its coming, and to repent in sackcloth and ashes over our inconsistent walk and conversation, which has brought reproach upon that worthy name whereby we are called. I would not be understood as implying that the plaudits of worldlings are to be considered as the test of Christian character. Far from it; for who can forget that the words of Christ himself were, "In the world ye shall have tribulation?" But there are multitudes around us who would never willingly point the finger of scorn at a professed follower of Jesus, and who would yet acknowledge, if asked why they continue to neglect the great salvation, that the defects and short-comings of those calling themselves Christians, are the grand stumbling blocks to their souls. Superficial as are the views of the multitude on *other* subjects, here they are eagle-eyed and keen observers. Said a young friend of mine not long since, "I might have read the works of Hume and Voltaire with impunity; they would have been powerless; but the inconsistent life of that individual (alluding to one who is a member of the church) has almost convinced me that there is no reality in religion." Sad, sad truth! but 'twas even so! and when will it be otherwise? Not until *we* awake to a sense of our high and holy calling, and become living epistles, "known and read of all men." Not until we be less conformed to the world, and wholly transformed into the image of Jesus, our Redeemer.

WANT OF CO-OPERATION FROM THE CHURCH.

"Our Sabbath school,"—says a superintendent,—"unlike many others, has never been adopted by the church as her foster child. The church, *as a church*, feels no responsibility in sustaining it, and as a consequence, the labor and the care are shared by the few, who, regarding the Sabbath school as an important auxiliary to the ministry, make it a matter of conscience and duty to yield it their cordial support. It will readily be seen, that a school conducted on this plan, depending for its very existence on the exercise of the religious principle, will flourish only so far as the church contains within itself a large number whose piety is marked by a glowing zeal, regulated and attempered by a just discrimination, and a high degree of intelligence. Our school has, for much of the time during the past year, labored for the want of teachers of this stamp, and this, with other things, has essentially aided to give an unpromising aspect to the school when compared with former years. These things, which have had a tendency to depress us, are now in a measure obviated, and our prospects for the ensuing year are more than usually promising."

HUMBLE BUT USEFUL.

"It is true of the Sabbath school, as of all other departments of moral and religious effort, that each laborer must be content 'to dig his small allotment in the great field of usefulness, to contribute his little item to the cause of truth and righteousness, and to look for the sum total as the product of innumerable contributions, each of them as meritorious, and many of them, perhaps, far more important and splendid than his own;' but the allotment belonging to us, whether great or small, must not be neglected—the item, whatever its value, must be faithfully contributed."

John M Phillips M

Louis S Phillips

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a cat

a cat

John is a good boy

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